

LETTERS

OF the RIGHT HONOURABLE

Lady M---y W----y M-----e.

VOL. II.

A

LETTERS

Of the Honorable

W. M. W. M. C.

A

11-20-2
4-5-2
36-7-2

LETTERS

Of the RIGHT HONOURABLE

Lady M---y W----y M-----e:

Written, during her TRAVELS in

EUROPE, ASIA AND AFRICA;

TO

Persons of Distinction, Men of Letters, &c.
in different PARTS of EUROPE.

WHICH CONTAIN,

Among other CURIOUS Relations,
ACCOUNTS of the POLICY and MANNERS
of the TURKS;

Drawn from Sources that have been inaccessible to
other Travellers.

A NEW EDITION.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

Printed for T. BECKET and P. A. DE
HONDT, in the Strand. MDCCLXIX.

Oct 3157. 63.7

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY

FROM THE LIBRARY OF
MORTON DAVIS MITCHELL

SEP 14 1914

LETTERS

OF THE

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu

TO

TO THE

Persons of Distinction, Men of Letters, &c.
in the Kingdom of Great Britain.

WITH AN

Among other curious Relations.

Accounts of the POLITICAL and MANNERS
of the TURKS;

Drawn from Secret Intelligence, &c.

A

NO. 1. VOL. I.

LONDON:

Printed for J. Baskett, at the R. A. B. D.
House, in Strand, MDCCLXXIII.

LETTER XXVIII.

To the Countess of B_____.

Adrianople, April 1, O. S. 1718.

AS I never can forget the smallest of your ladyship's commands, my first business here, has been to enquire after the stuffs, you ordered me to look for, without being able to find what you would like. The difference of the drefs here and at London is so great, the same sort of things are not proper for *Castans* and *Manteaus*. However, I will not give over my search, but renew it again at Constantinople, though I have reason to believe there is nothing finer than what is to be found here, as this place is at present the residence of the court. The Grand Signior's eldest

VOL. II.

B

daughter

daughter was married some few days before I came hither, and upon that occasion the Turkish Ladies display all their magnificence. The bride was conducted to her husband's house in very great splendor. She is widow of the late Vizier, who was killed at Peterwaradin, though that ought rather to be called a *contract*, than a *marriage*, since she never has lived with him; however, the greatest part of his wealth is hers. He had the permission of visiting her in the Seraglio; and being one of the handsomest men in the empire, had very much engaged her affections.——When she saw this second husband, who is at least fifty, she could not forbear bursting into tears. He is indeed a man of merit, and the declared favourite of the Sultan, (which they call *Mosayp*) but that is not enough to make him pleasing in the eyes of a girl of thirteen.

The

The government here is entirely in the hands of the army. The Grand Signior, with all his absolute power, is as much a slave as any of his subjects, and trembles at a Janizary's frown. Here is, indeed, a much greater appearance of subjection than amongst us; a minister of state is not spoke to, but upon the knee; should a reflection on his conduct be dropt in a coffee-house, (for they have spies every where) the house would be raz'd to the ground, and perhaps the whole company put to the torture. No *buzzing mobs, senseless pamphlets, and tavern disputes about politicks*;

A consequential ill that Freedom draws;
A bad effect, — but from a noble cause.

None of our harmless calling names!
but when a minister here displeases the

people, in three hours time he is dragged even from his masters arms. They cut off his hands, head and feet, and throw them before the palace-gate, with all the respect in the world ; while the Sultan (to whom they all profess an unlimited adoration) sits trembling in his apartment, and dare neither defend nor revenge his favourite. This is the blessed condition of the most absolute monarch upon earth, who owns no *Law* but his *Will*.

I cannot help wishing, in the loyalty of my heart, that the parliament would send hither a ship-load of your passive-obedient men, that they might see arbitrary government in its clearest strongest light, where 'tis hard to judge, whether the Prince, People or Ministers, are most miserable. I could make many reflections on this subject ; but I know,

Madam,

Madam, your own good sense has already furnished you with better than I am capable of.

I went yesterday along with the French Ambassadors to see the grand Signior in his passage to the Mosque. He was preceded by a numerous guard of Janizaries, with vast white feathers on their heads, as also by the *Spahis* and *Bostangees*, (these are foot and horse guards) and the Royal Gardeners, which are a very considerable body of men, dressed in different habits of fine lively colours, so that at a distance, they appeared like a parterre of tulips. After them the Aga of the Janizaries, in a robe of purple velvet, lined with silver tissue, his horse led by two slaves richly dressed. Next him the *Kyzlier-Aga*, (your ladyship knows, this is the chief guardian of the Seraglio Ladies) in a deep yellow

cloth (which suited very well to his black face) lined with fables. Last came his *Sublimity* himself, arrayed in green, lined with the fur of a black Muscovite fox, which is supposed worth a thousand pounds sterling, and mounted on a fine horse, with furniture embroidered with jewels. Six more horses richly caparisoned were led after him; and two of his principal courtiers bore, one his gold, and the other his silver coffee-pot, on a staff; another carried a silver stool on his head, for him to sit on.— It would be too tedious to tell your ladyship, the various dresses and turbants by which their rank is distinguished; but they were all extremely rich and gay, to the number of some thousands; so that perhaps there cannot be seen a more beautiful procession. The Sultan appeared to us a handsome man of about forty, with something, however, severe in

in his countenance, and his eyes very full and black. He happened to stop under the window where we stood, and (I suppose being told who we were) looked upon us very attentively, so that we had full leisure to consider him. The French Ambassadors agreed with me as to his good mien. I see that lady very often; she is young, and her conversation would be a great relief to me, if I could persuade her to live without those forms and ceremonies that make life formal and tiresome. But she is so delighted with her guards, her four and twenty footmen, gentlemen-ushers, &c. that she would rather die than make me a visit without them; not to reckon a coachful of attending damsels yclep'd maids of honour. What vexes me is, that as long as she will visit me with a troublesome equipage, I am obliged to do the same; however, our mutual

interest makes us much together. I went with her the other day all round the town, in an open gilt chariot, with our joint train of attendants, preceded by our guards, who might have summoned the people to see what they had never seen, nor ever perhaps would see again, two young Christian Ambassadors at the same time. Your Ladyship may easily imagine, we drew a vast croud of spectators, but all silent as death. If any of them had taken the liberties of our mobs upon any strange sight, our Janizaries had made no scruple of falling on them with their scymitars, without danger for so doing, being above law. These people however (I mean the Janizaries) have some good qualities ; they are very zealous and faithful where they serve, and look upon it as their business to fight for you on all occasions. Of this

this I had a very pleasant instance in a village on this side Phillippopolis, where we were met by our domestic guards. I happened to bespeak pigeons for supper, upon which one of my Janizaries went immediately to the *Cadi* (the chief civil officer of the town) and ordered him to send in some dozens. The poor man answered, that he had already sent about, but could get none. My Janizary, in the height of his zeal for my service, immediately locked him up prisoner in his room, telling him he deserved death for his impudence, in offering to excuse his not obeying my command; but, out of respect to me, he would not punish him but by my order. Accordingly he came very gravely to me, to ask what should be done to him; adding by way of compliment, that if I pleased he would bring me his head.—This
 may

may give you some idea of the unlimited power of these fellows, who are all sworn brothers, and bound to revenge the injuries done to one another, whether at Cairo, Aleppo, or any part of the world. This inviolable league makes them so powerful, that the greatest man at court never speaks to them but in a flattering tone ; and in Asia, any man that is rich, is forced to enroll himself a Janizary to secure his estate.—But I have already said enough, and I dare swear, dear Madam, that, by this time, 'tis a very comfortable reflection to you, that there is no possibility of your receiving such a tedious letter but once in six months ; 'tis that consideration has given me the assurance of entertaining you so long, and will, I hope, plead the excuse of, dear Madam,

Yours, &c.

LETTER XXIX.

To the Countess of _____

Adrianople, April 1, O. S. 1717.

I WISH to God, dear sister, that you were as regular in letting me know what passes on your side of the globe, as I am careful in endeavouring to amuse you by the account of all I see here, that I think worth your notice. You content yourself with telling me over and over that the town is very dull : it may possibly be dull to you, when every day does not present you with something new ; but for me, that am in arrears, at least two months news, all that seems very stale with you, would be very fresh and sweet here. Pray let me into more particulars, and I will try
to

to awaken your gratitude by giving you a full and true relation of the novelties of this place, none of which would surprize you more than a sight of my person, as I am now in my Turkish habit, though I believe you would be of my opinion, that 'tis admirably becoming.—I intend to send you my picture; in the mean time accept of it here.

The first part of my dress is a pair of drawers, very full that reach to my shoes, and conceal the legs more modestly than your petticoats. They are of a thin rose coloured damask, brocaded with silver flowers. My shoes are of a white kid leather, embroidered with gold. Over this hangs my smock, of a fine white silk gauze, edged with embroidery. This smock has wide sleeves hanging half-way down the arm, and is closed

closed at the neck with a diamond button, but the shape and colour of the bosom is very well to be distinguished through it.——The *Antery* is a waistcoat, made close to the shape, of white and gold damask, with very long sleeves falling back, and fringed with deep gold fringe, and should have diamond or pearl buttons. My *Castan*, of the same stuff with my drawers, is a robe exactly fitted to my shape and reaching to my feet, with very long strait falling sleeves. Over this is the girdle, of about four fingers broad, which all that can afford it, have entirely of diamonds or other precious stones; those who will not be at that expence, have it of exquisite embroidery on sattin; but it must be fastened before with a clasp of diamonds——The *Curdée* is a loose robe they throw off, or put on, according to the

the weather, being of a rich brocade (mine is green and gold) either lined with ermine or fables; the sleeves reach very little below the shoulders. The head-dress is composed of a cap called *Tal-pock*, which is, in winter, of fine velvet embroidered with pearls or diamonds, and, in summer, of a light shining silver stuff. This is fixed on one side of the head, hanging a little way down with a gold tassel, and bound on, either with a circle of diamonds (as I have seen several) or a rich embroidered handkerchief. On the other side of the head, the hair is laid flat; and here the ladies are at liberty to shew their fancies; some putting flowers, others a plume of heron's feathers, and, in short, 'what they please; but the most general fashion is, a large *Bouquet* of jewels, made like natural flowers that is, the *buds* of pearl; the

the *roses* of different coloured rubies ; the *jeffamines* of diamonds ; the *jonquils* of topazes, &c. so well set and enamelled, 'tis hard to imagine any thing of that kind so beautiful. The hair hangs at its full length behind, divided into tresses braided with pearl or ribbon, which is always in great quantity. I never saw in my life, so many fine heads of hair. In one lady's I have counted a hundred and ten of the tresses, all natural ; but it must be owned that every kind of beauty is more common here than with us. 'Tis surprising to see a young woman that is not very handsome. They have naturally the most beautiful complexion in the world, and generally large black eyes. I can assure you with great truth, that the court of England (though I believe it the fairest in Christendom) does not contain so many

many beauties as are under our protection here. They generally shape their eye-brows, and both Greeks and Turks have the custom of putting round their eyes a black tincture, that, at a distance, or by candle-light, adds very much to the blackness of them. I fancy many of our ladies would be overjoyed to know this secret; but 'tis too visible by day. They die their nails a rose-colour; but I own, I cannot enough accustom myself to this fashion, to find any beauty in it.

As to their morality or good conduct, I can say, like Harlequin, that 'tis just as 'tis with you; and the Turkish ladies don't commit one sin the less for not being Christians. Now that I am a little acquainted with their ways, I cannot forbear admiring, either the exemplary discretion,

discretion, or extreme stupidity of all the writers that have given accounts of them. 'Tis very easy to see, they have in reality more liberty than we have. No woman, of what rank soever, is permitted to go into the streets without two *Murlins*, one that covers her face, all but her eyes; and another, that hides the whole dress of her head, and hangs half way down her back. Their shapes are also wholly concealed by a thing they call a *Ferigee*, which no woman of any sort appears without; this has strait sleeves, that reach to their fingers ends, and it laps all round them, not unlike a riding-hood. In winter, 'tis of cloth; and in summer, of plain stuff or silk. You may guess then how effectually this disguises them, so that there is no distinguishing the great lady from her slave. 'Tis impossible for the most jea-

lous husband to know his wife, when he meets her, and no man dare touch or follow a woman in the street.

This perpetual masquerade gives them entire liberty of following their inclinations without danger of discovery. The most usual method of intrigue is, to send an appointment to the lover to meet the lady at a Jew's shop, which are as notoriously convenient as our Indian houses; and yet, even those who don't make use of them, do not scruple to go to buy penny-worths, and tumble over rich goods, which are chiefly to be found amongst that sort of people. The great ladies seldom let their gallants know who they are; and 'tis so difficult to find it out, that they can very seldom guess at her name, whom they have corresponded with for above half a year together.

You

You may easily imagine the number of faithful wives very small in a country where they have nothing to fear from a lover's indiscretion, since we see so many have the courage to expose themselves to that in this world, and all the threatened punishment of the next, which is never preached to the Turkish damsels. Neither have they much to apprehend from the resentment of their husbands: those ladies that are rich, having all their money in their own hands. Upon the whole, I look upon the Turkish women, as the only free people in the Empire; the very Divan pays a respect to them, and the Grand Signior himself, when a *Bassa* is executed, never violates the privileges of the *Haram*, (or womens apartment) which remains unsearched and entire to the widow. They are Queens of their slaves, whom the

husband has no permission so much as to look upon, except it be an old woman or two that his lady chuses. 'Tis true, their law permits them four wives, but there is no instance of a man of quality that makes use of this liberty, or of a woman of rank that would suffer it. When a husband happens to be inconstant (as those things will happen) he keeps his mistress in a house apart, and visits her as privately as he can, just as 'tis with you. Amongst all the great men here, I only know the *Tefterdar* (*i. e.* Treasurer) that keeps a number of she-slaves for his own use, (that is, on his own side of the house, for a slave once given to serve a lady, is entirely at her disposal) and he is spoke of as a libertine, or what we should call a rake; and his wife won't see him, though she continues to live in his house. Thus
you

you see, dear sister the manners of mankind do not differ so widely, as our voyage writers would make us believe. Perhaps, it would be more entertaining to add a few surprising customs of my own invention ; but nothing seems to me so agreeable as truth, and I believe nothing so acceptable to you. I conclude therefore, with repeating the great truth of my being,

Dear Sister, &c.

LETTER XXX.

To Mr. Pope.

Adrianople, April 1, O. S.

I DARE say you expect, at least, something very new in this letter, after I have gone a journey, not undertaken, by any Christian, for some hundred years. The most remarkable accident that happened to me, was my being very near over-turned into the Hebrus; and, if I had much regard for the glories that one's name enjoys after death, I should certainly be sorry for having missed the romantic conclusion of swimming down the same river in which the musical head of *Orpheus* repeated verses, so many ages since:

“*Caput*

*“ Caput a cervice revulsum,
 “ Gurgite cum medio, portans Oeagrius Hebrus
 “ Volveret, Euridicen vox ipsa, et frigida lingua
 “ Ah! miseram Euridicen! anima fugiente
 “ vocabat,
 “ Euridicen toto referebant flumine ripæ.”*

Whoknows but some of your bright wits,
 might have found it a subject affording
 many poetical turns, and have told the
 world in an heroic Elegy, that,

As equal were our souls, so equal were our fates.

I despair of ever hearing so many fine
 things said of me, as so extraordinary a
 death would have given occasion for.

I am at this present moment writing
 in a house situated on the banks of the
 Hebrus, which runs under my chamber
 window. My garden is full of tall

cypress trees, upon the branches of which, several couple of true turtles are saying soft things to one another from morning till night. How naturally do *boughs* and *vows* come into my mind, at this minute? And must not you confess, to my praise, that 'tis more than an ordinary discretion, that can resist the wicked suggestions of poetry, in a place where truth, for once, furnishes all the ideas of pastoral. The summer is already far advanced, in this part of the world; and for some miles round Adrianople, the whole ground is laid out in gardens, and the banks of the rivers are set with rows of fruit trees, under which all the most considerable Turks divert themselves every evening, not with walking, that is not one of their pleasures; but a set party of them choose out a green spot, where the shade is very thick,

thick, and there they spread a carpet, on which they sit drinking their coffee, and are generally attended by some slave with a fine voice, or that plays on some instrument. Every twenty paces you may see one of these little companies, listening to the dashing of the river; and this taste is so universal, that the very gardeners are not without it. I have often seen them and their children sitting on the banks of the river, and playing on a rural instrument, perfectly answering the description of the ancient *Fistula*, being composed of unequal reeds, with a simple but agreeable softness in the sound.

Mr. *Addison* might here make the experiment he speaks of in his travels; there not being one instrument of music
among

among the Greek or Roman Statues, that is not to be found in the hands of the people of this country. The young lads generally divert themselves with making garlands for their favourite lambs, which I have often seen painted and adorned with flowers, lying at their feet, while they sung or played. It is not that they ever read Romances. But these are the ancient amusements here, and as natural to them as cudgel-playing and foot-ball to our British swains; the softness and warmth of the climate forbidding all rough exercises, which were never so much as heard of amongst them, and naturally inspiring a laziness and aversion to labour, which the great plenty indulges. These gardeners are the only happy race of country people in Turkey. They furnish all the city with

fruits

fruits and herbs, and seem to live very easily. They are most of them Greeks, and have little houses in the midst of their gardens, where their wives and daughters take a liberty, not permitted in the town, I mean to go unveiled. These wenches are very neat and handsome, and pass their time at their looms under the shade of the trees.

I no longer look upon *Theocritus* as a romantic writer; he has only given a plain image of the way of life amongst the peasants of his country, who, before oppression had reduced them to want, were, I suppose, all employed as the better sort of them are now. I don't doubt, had he been born a Briton, but his *Idylliums* had been filled with descriptions of threshing and churning, both which are unknown here, the corn being
all

all trod out by oxen; and butter (I speak it with sorrow) unheard of.

I read over your *Homer* here with an infinite pleasure, and find several little passages explained, that I did not before entirely comprehend the beauty of: Many of the customs, and much of the dress then in fashion, being yet retained. I don't wonder to find more remains here, of an age so distant, than is to be found in any other country, the Turks not taking that pains to introduce their own manners, as has been generally practised by other nations, that imagine themselves more polite. It would be too tedious to you to point out all the passages that relate to present customs. But I can assure you, that the Princesses and great ladies pass their time at their looms, embroidering veils and robes, surrounded
by

by their maids, which are always very numerous, in the same manner as we find *Andromache* and *Helen* described. The description of the belt of *Menelaus* exactly resembles those that are now worn by the great men, fastened before with broad golden clasps, and embroidered round with rich work. The snowy veil, that *Helen* throws over her face, is still fashionable; and I never see half a dozen of old Bashaws (as I do very often) with their reverend beards, sitting basking in the sun, but I recollect good King *Priam* and his counsellors. Their manner of dancing is certainly the same that *Diana* is sung to have danced on the banks of *Eurotas*. The great lady still leads the dance, and is followed by a troop of young girls, who imitate her steps, and if she sings, make up the chorus. The tunes are extremely

extremely gay and lively, yet with something in them wonderfully soft. The steps are varied according to the pleasure of her that leads the dance, but always in exact time, and infinitely more agreeable than any of our dances, at least in my opinion. I sometimes make one in the train, but am not skilful enough to lead; these are the Grecian dances, the Turkish being very different.

I should have told you, in the first place, that the Eastern manners give a great light into many scripture-passages, that appear odd to us, their phrases being commonly what we should call Scripture language. The vulgar Turk is very different from what is spoke at court, or amongst the people of figure; who always mix so much Arabic and Persian

Persian in their discourse, that it may
 very well be called another language.
 And 'tis as ridiculous to make use of the
 expressions commonly used, in speaking
 to a great man or lady, as it would be to
 speak broad Yorkshire, or Somersetshire,
 in the drawing room. Besides this di-
 stinction, they have what they call the
sublime, that is, a stile proper for poetry,
 and which is the exact Scripture stile. I
 believe you would be pleased to see a ge-
 nuine example of this; and I am very
 glad I have it in my power to satisfy your
 curiosity, by sending you a faithful copy
 of the verses that *Ibrahim Bassa*, the
 reigning favourite, has made for the
 young Princess, his contracted wife,
 whom he is not yet permitted to visit
 without witnesses, though she is gone
 home to his house. He is a man of wit
 and learning; and whether or no he is
 capable

capable of writing good verse, you may be sure that, on such an occasion, he would not want the assistance of the best poets in the empire. Thus the verses may be looked upon as a sample of their finest poetry, and I don't doubt you'll be of my mind, that it is most wonderfully resembling the *Song of Solomon*, which also was addressed to a Royal Bride.

TURKISH VERSES addressed to the *Sultana*, eldest daughter of SULTAN
 ACHMET III.

STANZA I.

Ver. *THE Nightingale now wanders in the vines;*

1. *Her passion is to seek roses.*

2. *I went down to admire the beauty of the vines;
 The sweetness of your charms has ravish'd my soul.*

3. *Your eyes are black and lovely,
 But wild and disdainful as those of a stag;*

STANZA

STANZA II.

1. *The wished possession is delayed from day to day,
The cruel Sultan ACHMET will not permit me
To see those cheeks more vermillion than roses.*
2. *I dare not snatch one of your kisses,
The sweetness of your charms has ravish'd my
soul.*
3. *Your eyes are black and lovely,
But wild and disdainful as those of a stag.*

STANZA III.

1. *The wretched IBRAHIM sighs in these verses,
One dart from your eyes has pierc'd thro' my
heart.*
2. *Ah! when will the hour of possession arrive?
Must I yet wait a long time?
The sweetness of your charms has ravish'd my
soul.*
3. *Ah! SULTANA! stag-ey'd---an angel amongst
angels!
I desire,---and, my desire remains unsatisfied.
Can you take delight to prey upon my heart?*

STANZA IV.

1. *My cries pierce the heavens !
My eyes are without sleep !
Turn to me, SULTANA—let me gaze on thy
beauty.*
2. *Adieu———I go down to the grave.
If you call me———I return.
My heart is—hot as sulphur ;--sigh and it will
flame.*
3. *Crown of my life, fair light of my eyes !
My SULTANA ! my princess !
I rub my face against the earth ;--I am drown'd
in scalding tears--I rave !
Have you no compassion ? will you not turn to
look upon me ?*

I have taken abundance of pains to get these verses in a literal translation ; and if you were acquainted with my interpreters, I might spare myself the trouble of assuring you, that they have received no poetical touches from their hands. In my opinion, (allowing for

3

the

the inevitable faults of a prose translation into a language so very different) there is a good deal of beauty in them. The epithet of *stag-ey'd*, (though the sound is not very agreeable in English) pleases me extremely; and I think it a very lively image of the fire and indifference in his mistresses eyes.———Monsieur *Boileau* has very justly observed, that we are never to judge of the elevation of an expression in an antient author, by the sound it carries with us; since it may be extremely fine with them, when, at the same time, it appears low or uncouth to us. You are so well acquainted with *Homer*, you cannot but have observed the same thing, and you must have the same indulgence for all oriental poetry. The repetitions at the end of the two first Stanzas are meant for a sort of *Chorus*, and are agreeable to the

antient manner of writing, The music of the verses apparently changes in the third Stanza, where the burden is altered; and I think he very artfully seems more passionate at the conclusion, as 'tis natural for people to warm themselves by their own discourse, especially on a subject in which one is deeply concerned; 'tis certainly far more touching, than our modern custom of concluding a song of passion, with a turn which is inconsistent with it. The first verse is a description of the season of the year; all the country now being full of Nightingales, whose amours with roses, is an Arabian fable, as well known here, as any part of *Ovid* amongst us, and is much the same as if an English poem should begin, by saying,——“*Now Philomela sings.*” Or what if I turned the whole into the
style

style of English poetry, to see how it
would look ?

S T A N Z A I.

“ **N**OW Philomel renews her tender strain,
“ Indulging all the night her pleasing
pain ;

“ I sought the groves to hear the wanton sing,
“ There saw a face more beauteous than the
spring,

“ Your large stag-eyes where thousand glories
play,

“ As bright, as lively, but as wild as they.

S T A N Z A II.

“ In vain I’m promis’d such a heavenly prize.

“ Ah ! cruel SULTAN ! who delay’st my joys !

“ While piercing charms transfix my amorous
heart,

“ I dare not snatch one kiss, to ease the smart.

“ Those eyes like, &c.

S T A N Z A III.

- “ Your wretched lover in these lines complains ;
 “ From those dear beauties rise his killing pains,
 “ When will the hour of wish’d-for bliss arrive ?
 “ Must I wait longer ?--- Can I wait and live ?
 “ Ah ! bright Sultana ! maid divinely fair !
 “ Can you, unpitying see the pains I bear ?

S T A N Z A IV,

- “ The Heavens relenting hear my piercing cries,
 “ I loath the light, and sleep forsakes my eyes,
 “ Turn thee, Sultana, ere thy lover dies ;
 “ Sinking to earth, I sigh the last adieu,
 “ Call me, my Goddess, and my life renew,
 “ My Queen ! my angel ! my fond heart’s desire !
 “ I rave---my bosom burns with heavenly fire !
 “ Pity that passion which thy charms inspire.

I have taken the liberty in the second
 verse, of following what I suppose the
 true sense of the author, though not
 literally

literally expressed. By his saying *he went down to admire the beauty of the Vines, and her charms ravished his soul*; I understand a poetical fiction, of having first seen her in a garden, where he was admiring the beauty of the spring. But I could not forbear retaining the comparison of her eyes with those of a stag, though perhaps the novelty of it may give it a burlesque sound in our language. I cannot determine upon the whole, how well I have succeeded in the translation, neither do I think our English proper to express such violence of passion, which is very seldom felt amongst us. We want, also, those compound words which are very frequent and strong in the Turkish language.

You see I am pretty far gone in Oriental learning, and to say truth, I study

very hard. I wish my studies may give me an occasion of entertaining your curiosity, which will be the utmost advantage hoped for from them, by,

Yours, &c.

LET

LETTER XXXI.

To Mrs. S. C.

Adrianople, April 1, O. S.

IN my opinion, dear S. I ought rather to quarrel with you, for not answering my Nimuegen letter of August, till December, than to excuse my not writing again till now. I am sure there is on my side a very good excuse for silence, having gone such tiresome land-journies, though I don't find the conclusion of them so bad as you seem to imagine. I am very easy here, and not in the solitude you fancy me. The great number of Greeks, French, English and Italians, that are under our protection, make their court to me from morning till night ; and I'll assure you,
are,

are, many of them, very fine ladies ; for there is no possibility for a Christian to live easily under this government, but by the protection of an Ambassador—and the richer they are, the greater is their danger.

Those dreadful stories you have heard of the *Plague*, have very little foundation in truth. I own, I have much ado to reconcile myself to the sound of a word, which has always given me such terrible ideas; though I am convinced there is little more in it, than in a fever. As a proof of this, let me tell you, that we passed through two or three towns most violently infected. In the very next house where we lay (in one of those places) two persons died of it. Luckily for me, I was so well deceived, that I knew nothing of the matter; and

I was

I was made believe, that our second cook had only a great cold. However, we left our doctor to take care of him, and yesterday they both arrived here in good health; and I am now let into the secret, that he has had the *Plague*. There are many that escape it, neither is the air ever infected. I am persuaded that it would be as easy a matter to root it out here, as out of Italy and France; but it does so little mischief, they are not very solicitous about it, and are content to suffer this distemper, instead of our variety, which they are utterly unacquainted with.

A propos of distempers, I am going to tell you a thing, that will make you wish yourself here. The *small pox*, so fatal, and so general amongst us, is here entirely harmless, by the invention of *engrafting*,

grafting, which is the term they give it. There is a set of old women, who make it their business to perform the operation, every autumn, in the month of September, when the great heat is abated. People send to one another to know if any of their family has a mind to have the small-pox; they make parties for this purpose, and when they are met (commonly fifteen or sixteen together) the old woman comes with a nut shell full of the matter of the best sort of small-pox, and asks what vein you please to have opened. She immediately rips open that, you offer to her, with a large needle (which gives you no more pain than a common scratch) and puts into the vein, as much matter as can lie upon the head of her needle, and after that, binds up the little wound
with

with a hollow bit of shell, and in this manner opens four or five veins. The Grecians have commonly the superstition of opening one in the middle of the forehead, on in each arm, and one on the breast, to mark the sign of the cross; but this has a very ill effect, all these wounds leaving little scars, and is not done by those that are not superstitious, who chuse to have them in the legs, or that part of the arm that is concealed. The children or young patients play together all the rest of the day, and are in perfect health to the eighth. Then the fever begins to seize them, and they keep their beds two days, very seldom three. They have very rarely above twenty or thirty in their faces, which never mark, and in eight days time they are as well as before their illness. Where they are wounded, there remains running
fores

fores during the distemper, which I don't doubt is a great relief to it. Every year thousands undergo this operation, and the French Ambassador says pleasantly, that they take the small-pox here by way of diversion, as they take the waters in other countries. There is no example of any one that has died in it, and you may believe I am well satisfied of the safety of this experiment, since I intend to try it on my dear little son. I am patriot enough to take pains to bring this useful invention into fashion in England, and I should not fail to write to some of our doctors very particularly about it, if I knew any one of them that I thought had virtue enough to destroy such a considerable branch of their revenue, for the good of mankind. But that distemper is too beneficial to them, not to expose to all their resentment, the hardy wight

wight, that should undertake to put an end to it. Perhaps if I live to return I may, however, have courage to war with them. Upon this occasion, admire the heroism in the heart of,

Your friend, &c. &c.

L E T T E R XXXII.

To Mrs. T.

Adrianople, April 1, O. S. 1718.

I CAN now tell dear Mrs. T—, that I am safely arrived at the end of my very long journey. I will not tire you with the account of the many fatigues I have suffered. You would rather be informed of the strange things that are to be seen here; and a letter out of Turkey, that has nothing extraordinary in it, would be as great a disappointment as my visitors will receive at London, if I return thither without any rarities to shew them.——What shall I tell you of?——You never saw camels in your life; and perhaps the description of them will appear new to you; I
can

can assure you, the first sight of them was so to me ; and though I have seen hundreds of pictures of those animals, I never saw any that was resembling enough to give a true idea of them. I am going to make a bold observation, and possibly a false one, because no body has ever made it before me ; but I do take them to be of the stag-kind ; their legs, bodies, and necks, are exactly shaped like them, and their colour very near the same. 'Tis true, they are much larger, being a great deal higher than a horse, and so swift, that, after the defeat of Peterwaradin, they far outran the swiftest horses, and brought the first news of the loss of the battle to Belgrade. They are never thoroughly tamed ; the drivers take care to tie them one to another with strong ropes, fifty in a string, led by an ass, on which the

driver rides. I have seen three hundred in one caravan. They carry the third part more than a horse ; but 'tis a particular art to load them, because of the bunch on their backs. They seem to me very ugly creatures, their heads being ill formed and disproportioned to their bodies. They carry all the burdens ; and the beasts destined to the plough are buffaloes, an animal you are also unacquainted with. They are larger and more clumsy than an ox ; they have short thick black horns close to their heads, which grow turning backwards. They say this horn looks very beautiful when 'tis well polished. They are all black, with very short hair on their hides, and have extremely little white eyes, that make them look like devils. The country people dye their tails, and the hair of their forehead red, by way

of ornament. Horses are not put here to any laborious work, nor are they at all fit for it. They are beautiful and full of spirit, but generally little, and not strong, as the breed of colder countries; very gentle, however, with all their vivacity, and also swift and sure-footed. I have a little white favourite, that I would not part with on any terms; he prances under me with so much fire, you would think that I had a great deal of courage to dare mount him; yet I'll assure you, I never rid a horse so much at my command, in my life. My side-saddle is the first that was ever seen in this part of the world, and is gazed at with as much wonder, as the ship of Columbus in the first discovery of America. Here are some little birds, held in a sort of religious reverence, and for that reason multiply prodigiously; *Turtles* on the

account of their innocence ; and *Storcks*, because they are supposed to make every winter the pilgrimage to Mecca. To say truth, they are the happiest subjects under the Turkish government, and are so sensible of their privileges, that they walk the streets without fear, and generally build in the low parts of houses. Happy are those whose houses are so distinguished as the vulgar Turks are perfectly persuaded, that they will not be, that year, attacked either by fire or pestilence. I have the happiness of one of their sacred nests under my chamber-window.

Now I am talking of my chamber, I remember, the description of the houses here will be as new to you, as any of the birds or beasts. I suppose you have read in most of our accounts of Turkey, that

that their houses are the most miserable pieces of building in the world. I can speak very learnedly on that subject, having been in so many of them ; and I assure you, 'tis no such thing. We are now lodged in a palace, belonging to the Grand Signior. I really think the manner of building here very agreeable, and proper for the country. 'Tis true, they are not, at all, solicitous to beautify the outsides of their houses, and they are generally built of wood, which, I own, is the cause of many inconveniencies; but this is not to be charged on the ill taste of the people, but on the oppression of the government. Every house at the death of its master, is at the Grand Signior's disposal, and therefore no man cares to make a great expence, which he is not sure his family will be the better for. All their design is to build a house

commodious, and that will last their lives; and they are very indifferent if it falls down the year after. Every house, great and small, is divided into two distinct parts, which only join together by a narrow passage. The first house has a large court before it, and open galleries all round it, which is, to me, a thing very agreeable. This gallery leads to all the chambers, which are commonly large, and with two rows of windows, the first being of painted glass; they seldom build above two stories, each of which has galleries. The stairs are broad, and not often above thirty steps. This is the house belonging to the lord, and the adjoining one is called the *Haram*, that is, the ladies' apartment, (for the name of *seraglio* is peculiar to the Grand Signior); it has also a gallery running round it towards the garden, to which

which all the windows are turned, and the same number of chambers as the other, but more gay and splendid, both in painting and furniture. The second row of windows are very low, with grates like those of convents, the rooms are all spread with Persian carpets, and raised at one end of them (my chambers are raised at both ends) about two feet. This is the *Sopha*, which is laid with a richer sort of carpet, and all round it a sort of couch raised half a foot, covered with rich silk, according to the fancy or magnificence of the owner. Mine is of scarlet cloth with a gold fringe; round about this are placed, standing against the wall, two rows of cushions, the first very large, and the next little ones; and here the Turks display their greatest magnificence. They are generally brocade, or embroidery of gold wire upon
E 4
white

white fatten.—Nothing can look more gay and splendid.——These seats are also so convenient and easy, that I believe I shall never endure chairs as long as I live. — The rooms are low, which I think no fault, and the ceiling is always of wood, generally inlaid or painted with flowers. They open in many places, with folding doors, and serve for cabinets, I think more conveniently than ours. Between the windows are little arches to set pots of perfume, or baskets of flowers. But what pleases me best, is the fashion of having marble fountains in the lower part of the room, which throw up several spouts of water, giving, at the same time an agreeable coolness, and a pleasant dashing sound, falling from one basin to another. Some of these are very magnificent. Each house has a bagnio, which consists generally in

two or three little rooms leaded on the top, paved with marble, with basons, cocks of water, and all conveniencies for either hot or cold baths.

You will perhaps be surprized at an account so different from what you have been entertained with by the common voyage-writers, who are very fond of speaking of what they don't know. It must be under a very particular character, or on some extraordinary occasion, that a Christian is admitted into the house of a man of quality, and their *Harams* are always forbidden ground. Thus they can only speak of the outside, which makes no great appearance ; and the womens apartments are always built backward, removed from sight, and have no other prospect than the gardens,

gardens, which are enclosed with very high walls. There is none of our parterres in them; but they are planted with high trees, which give an agreeable shade, and, to my fancy, a pleasing view. In the midst of the garden is the *Chiosk*, that is, a large room, commonly beautified with a fine fountain in the midst of it. It is raised nine or ten steps, and enclosed with gilded lattices, round which, vines, jessamines, and honey-suckles, make a sort of green wall. Large trees are planted round this place, which is the scene of their greatest pleasures, and where the ladies spend most of their hours, employed by their musick or embroidery. ---In the public gardens, there are public *Chiosks*, where people go that are not so well accommodated
at

at home, and drink their coffee, sherbet, &c. Neither are they ignorant of a more durable manner of building; their Mosques are all of free-stone, and the public *Hanns*, or Inns, extremely magnificent, many of them taking up a large square, built round with shops under stone arches, where poor artificers are lodged *gratis*. They have always a Mosque joining to them, and the body of the *Hann* is a most noble hall, capable of holding three or four hundred persons, the court extremely spacious and cloisters round it, that give it the air of our colleges. I own, I think it a more reasonable piece of charity than the founding of convents.—I think I have now told you a great deal for once. If you don't like my choice of subjects, tell me

me what you would have me write upon; there is nobody more desirous to entertain you than, dear Mrs. T.

Yours, &c. &c.

L E T-

L E T T E R XXXIII.

To the Countess of —.

Adrianople, April 18, O. S.

I W R O T E to you, dear sister, and to all my other English correspondents, by the last ship, and only Heaven can tell, when I shall have another opportunity of sending to you; but I cannot forbear to write again, though perhaps my letter may lye upon my hands this two months. To confess the truth, my head is so full of my entertainment yesterday, that 'tis absolutely necessary, for my own repose, to give it some vent. Without farther preface I will then begin my story.

I was

I was invited to dine with the Grand *Vizier's* lady, and it was with a great deal of pleasure I prepared myself for an entertainment, which was never before given to any Christian. I thought I should very little satisfy her curiosity, (which I did not doubt was a considerable motive to the invitation) by going in a dress she was used to see, and therefore dressed myself in the court-habit of Vienna, which is much more magnificent than ours. However, I chose to go *incognito*, to avoid any disputes about ceremony, and went in a Turkish coach only attended by my woman, that held up my train, and the Greek lady, who was my interpreter. I was met, at the court door, by her black Eunuch, who helped me out of the coach with great respect, and conducted me through
several

several rooms, where her she slaves, finely dressed, were ranged on each side. In the innermost, I found the lady sitting on her sofa, in a sable vest. She advanced to meet me, and presented me half a dozen of her friends, with great civility. She seemed a very good woman, near fifty years old. I was surprized to observe so little magnificence in her house, the furniture being all very moderate; and, except the habits and number of her slaves, nothing about her appeared expensive. She guessed at my thoughts, and told me, she was no longer of an age to spend either her time or money in superfluities; that her whole expence was in charity, and her whole employment praying to God. There was no affectation in this speech; both she and her husband are entirely given up to devotion. He never looks
upon

upon any other woman ; and what is much more extraordinary, touches no bribes, notwithstanding the example of all his predecessors. He is so scrupulous in this point, he would not accept Mr. W——'s present, till he had been assured over and over, that it was a settled perquisite of his place, at the entrance of every Ambassador. She entertained me with all kind of civility, till dinner came in, which was served, one dish at a time, to a vast number, all finely dressed after their manner, which I don't think so bad as you have perhaps heard it represented. I am a very good judge of their eating, having lived three weeks in the house of an *Effendi* at Belgrade, who gave us very magnificent dinners, dressed by his own cooks. The first week they pleased me extremely ; but, I own, I then begun to grow weary of
their

their table, and desired our own cook might add a dish or two after our manner. But I attribute this to custom, and am very much inclined to believe that an Indian who had never tasted of either, would prefer their cookery to ours. Their sauces are very high, all the roast very much done. They use a great deal of very rich spice. The soup is served for the last dish; and they have, at least, as great a variety of ragouts, as we have. I was very sorry I could not eat of as many as the good lady would have had me, who was very earnest in serving me of every thing. The treat concluded with coffee and perfumes, which is a high mark of respect; two slaves kneeling *censed* my hair, clothes, and handkerchief. After this ceremony, she commanded her slaves to play and dance, which they did with their guitars in their

VOL. II. F hands,

hands, and she excused to me their want of skill, saying she took no care to accomplish them in that art.

I returned her thanks, and soon after took my leave. I was conducted back in the same manner I entered, and would have gone strait to my own house, but the Greek lady, with me, earnestly solicited me to visit the *Kabya's* lady, saying, he was the second Officer in the Empire, and ought indeed to be looked upon as the first, the Grand Vizir having only the name, while he exercised the authority. I had found so little diversion in the Vizier's *Haram*, that I had no mind to go into another. But her importunity prevailed with me, and I am extremely glad, I was so complaisant. All things here were with quite another air than at the Grand Vizier's; and the
very

very house confessed the difference between an old devotee, and a young beauty. It was nicely clean and magnificent. I was met at the door by two black Eunmchs, who led me through a long gallery, between two ranks of beautiful young girls, with their hair finely plaited, almost hanging to their feet, and dressed in fine light damasks, brocaded with silver. I was sorry that decency did not permit me to stop to consider them nearer. But that thought was lost upon my entrance into a large room, or rather pavillion, built round with gilded fashes, which were most of them thrown up, and the trees planted near them gave an agreeable shade, which hindered the Sun from being troublesome. The jessamines and honeysuckles that twisted round their trunks, shed a soft perfume, increased by a white

marble fountain playing sweet water in the lower part of the room, which fell into three or four basons, with a pleasing sound. The roof was painted with all sorts of flowers, falling out of gilded baskets, that seemed tumbling down. On a Sofa, raised three steps, and covered with fine Persian carpets, sat the Kahya's lady, leaning on cushions of white sattin embroidered; and at her feet, sat two young girls about twelve years old, lovely as angels, dressed perfectly rich, and almost covered with jewels. But they were hardly seen near the fair *Fatima*, (for that is her name) so much her beauty effaced every thing I have seen, nay, all that has been called lovely, either in England or Germany. I must own, that I never saw any thing so gloriously beautiful, nor can I recollect a face that would have been taken notice of.

of near her's. She stood up to receive me, saluting me, after their fashion, putting her hand to her heart with a sweetness full of majesty, that no court breeding could ever give. She ordered cushions to be given me, and took care to place me in the corner, which is the place of honour. I confess, though the Greek lady had before given me a great opinion of her beauty, I was so struck with admiration, that I could not, for some time, speak to her, being wholly taken up in gazing. That surprizing harmony of features! That charming result of the whole! That exact proportion of body! That lovely bloom of complexion unsullied by art! The unutterable enchantment of her smile! — But her eyes! — Large and black, with all the soft languishment of the

blue ! every turn of her face discovering some new grace.

After my first surprize was over, I endeavoured by nicely examining her face, to find out some imperfection, without any fruit of my search, but my being clearly convinced of the error of that vulgar notion, that a face exactly proportioned, and perfectly beautiful, would not be agreeable ; nature having done for her, with more success, what *Apelles* is said to have essayed by a collection of the most exact features to form a perfect face. Add to all this a behaviour so full of grace and sweetness, such easy motions with an air so majestic, yet free from stiffness or affectation that I am persuaded could she be suddenly transported upon the most polite throne
of

of Europe, no body would think her other than born and bred to be a Queen, though educated in a country we call barbarous. To say all in a word, our most celebrated English beauties would vanish near her.

She was dressed in a *Caftan* of gold brocade, flowered with silver, very well fitted to her shape, and shewing to admiration the beauty of her bosom, only shaded by the thin gauze of her shift. Her drawers were pale pink, her waistcoat green and silver, her slippers white satin, finely embroidered; her lovely arms adorned with bracelets of diamonds, and her broad girdle set round with diamonds; upon her head a rich Turkish handkerchief of pink and silver, her own fine black hair hanging a great length, in various tresses, and on

one side of her head some bodkins of jewels. I am afraid you will accuse me of extravagance in this description. I think I have read some where, that women always speak in rapture, when they speak of beauty, and I cannot imagine why they should not be allowed to do so. I rather think it a virtue to be able to admire without any mixture of desire or envy. The gravest writers have spoke with great warmth of some celebrated pictures and statues. The workmanship of Heaven certainly excels all our weak imitations, and, I think, has a much better claim to our praise. For my part, I am not ashamed to own, I took more pleasure in looking on the beauteous *Fatima*, than the finest piece of sculpture could have given me. She told me the two girls at her feet were her daughters, though she appeared

peared too young to be their mother. Here fair maids were ranged below the Sofa, to the number of twenty, and put me in mind of the pictures of the antient nymphs. I did not think all nature could have furnished such a scene of beauty. She made them a sign to play and dance. Four of them immediately begun to play some soft airs on instruments between a lute and a guitar, which they accompanied with their voices, while the others danced by turns. This dance was very different from what I had seen before. Nothing could be more artful, or more proper to raise *certain ideas*. The tunes so soft! — The motions so languishing! — Accompanied with pauses and dying eyes! half falling back, and then recovering themselves in so artful a manner, that I am very positive, the coldest and most rigid

rigid prude upon earth, could not have looked upon them without thinking of *something not to be spoke of*. — I suppose you may have read that the Turks have no music, but what is shocking to the ears; but this account is from those who never heard any but what is played in the streets, and is just as reasonable, as if a foreigner should take his ideas of English music from the *bladder* and *string*, or the *marrow-bones* and *cleavers*. I can assure you, that the music is extremely pathetic; 'tis true, I am inclined to prefer the Italian, but perhaps I am partial. I am acquainted with a Greek lady, who sings better than Mrs. *Robinson*; and is very well skilled in both, who gives the preference to the Turkish. 'Tis certain they have very fine natural voices, these were very agreeable. When the

dance was over, four fair slaves came into the room, with silver censors in their hands, and perfumed the air with amber, aloes-wood, and other scents. After this, they served me coffee upon their knees, in the finest Japan china, with *soucups* of silver gilt. The lovely *Fatima* entertained me all this while in the most polite agreeable manner, calling me often *Uzelle Sultanam*, or the Beautiful Sultana, and desiring my friendship with the best grace in the world, lamenting that she could not entertain me in my own language.

When I took my leave, two maids brought in a fine silver basket of embroidered handkerchiefs; she begg'd I would wear the richest for her sake, and gave the others to my woman and interpreters.

— I retired, thro' the same ceremonies

as

as before, and could not help thinking I had been some time in Mahomet's paradise, so much was I charmed with what I had seen. I know not how the relation of it appears to you. I wish it may give you part of my pleasure; for I would have my dear sister share in all the diversions of,

Yours, &c. &c.

L E T.

LETTER XXXIV.

To the Abbot of —.

Adrianople, May 17, O. S.

I AM going to leave *Adrianople*, and I would not do it, without giving you some account of all that is curious in it, which I have taken a great deal of pains to see. I will not trouble you with wise dissertations, whether or no this is the same city, that was anciently called *Orestesit* or *Oreste*, which you know better than I do. It is now called from the Emperor *Adrian*, and was the first European seat of the Turkish Empire, and has been the favourite residence of many Sultans. MAHOMET the fourth, and MUSTAPHA, the brother of the reigning Emperor, were so fond of

1

it,

it, that they wholly abandoned Constantinople, which humour so far exasperated the Janizaries, that it was a considerable motive to the rebellions that deposed them. Yet this man seems to love to keep his court here. I can give you no reason for this partiality. 'Tis true, the situation is fine, and the country all round very beautiful; but the air is extremely bad, and the Seraglio itself is not free from the ill effect of it. The town is said to be eight miles in compass, I suppose they reckon in the gardens. There are some good houses in it, I mean large ones; for the architecture of their palaces never makes any great shew. It is now very full of people; but they are most of them such as follow the court, or camp, and when they are removed, I am told 'tis no populous city. The river *Marit-*

za (antiently the *Hebrus*) on which it is situated, is dried up every summer, which contributes very much to make it unwholesome. It is now a very pleasant stream. There are two noble bridges built over it. I had the curiosity to go to see the Exchange in my Turkish dress, which is disguise sufficient. Yet I own, I was not very easy when I saw it crowded with Janizaries; but they dare not be rude to a woman, and made way for me with as much respect, as if I had been in my own figure. It is half a mile in length, the roof arched, and kept extremely neat. It holds three hundred and sixty-five shops, furnished with all sorts of rich goods exposed to sale in the same manner as at the New Exchange in London, But the pavement is kept much neater, and the shops are all so clean, they seem just new painted. — Idle people of all sorts walk

walk here for their diversion, or amuse themselves with drinking coffee, or sherbet, which is cried about as oranges and sweat-meats are in our play-houses. I observed most of the rich tradesmen were Jews. That people are in incredible power in this country. They have many privileges above all the natural Turks themselves, and have formed a very considerable commonwealth here, being judged by their own laws. They have drawn the whole trade of the Empire into their hands, partly by the firm union amongst themselves, and partly by the idle temper and want of industry in the Turks. Every Bassa has his Jew, who is his "*homme d'affaires*;" he is let into all his secrets, and does all his business. No bargain is made, no bribe received, no merchandise disposed of, but what passes through their

their hands. They are the physicians, the stewards, and the interpreters of all the great men. You may judge how advantageous this is to a people who never fail to make use of the smallest advantages. They have found the secret of making themselves so necessary, that they are certain of the protection of the court, whatever ministry is in power. Even the English, French, and Italian merchants, who are sensible of their artifices, are, however, forced to trust their affairs to their negotiation, nothing of trade being managed without them, and the meanest amongst them being too important to be disoblighd, since the whole body take care of his interests with as much vigour as they would those of the most considerable of their members. They are many of them vastly rich, but they take care to make little public shew

of it; though they live in their houses in the utmost luxury and magnificence. This copious subject has drawn me from my description of the exchange, founded by *Ali Bassa*, whose name it bears. Near it is the *Sheriski*, a street of a mile in length, full of shops of all kind of fine merchandize, but excessive dear, nothing being made here. It is covered on the top with boards to keep out the rain, that merchants may meet conveniently in all weathers. The *Besiten* near it, is another exchange, built upon pillars, where all sorts of horse furniture are sold. Glittering every where with gold, rich embroidery and jewels, it makes a very agreeable shew. From this place I went, in my Turkish coach, to the camp, which is to move in a few days to the frontiers. The Sultan is already gone to his tents, and all his court; the appearance

ance of them is indeed, very magnificent. Those of the great men are rather like palaces than tents, taking up a great compass of ground, and being divided into a vast number of apartments. They are all of green, and the *Bassas of three Tails*, have those ensigns of their power placed in a very conspicuous manner before their tents, which are adorned, on the top with gilded balls, more or less, according to their different ranks. The ladies go in coaches to see the camp, as eagerly as ours did to that of *Hide Park*; but 'tis very easy to observe, that the soldiers do not begin the campaign with any great chearfulness. The war is a general grievance upon the people, but particularly hard upon the tradesmen, now that the Grand Signior is resolved to lead his army in person. Every company of them is obliged,

upon this occasion, to make a present according to their ability.

I took the pains of rising at six in the morning to see the ceremony, which did not however begin till eight. The Grand Signior was at the Seraglio window, to see the procession, which passed through the principal streets. It was preceded by an *Effendi*, mounted on a camel, richly furnished, reading aloud the *Alcoran*, finely bound, laid upon a cushion. He was surrounded by a parcel of boys, in white, singing some verses of it, followed by a man dressed in green boughs, representing a clean husbandman sowing seed. After him several reapers with garlands of ears of corn, as *Ceres* is pictured, with scythes in their hands seeming to mow. Then a little machine drawn by oxen, in which was a wind-

wind-mill, and boys employed in grinding corn, followed by another machine, drawn by buffalos carrying an oven, and two more boys, one employed in kneading the bread, and another in drawing it out of the oven. These boys threw little cakes on both sides amongst the crowd, and were followed by the whole company of bakers marching on foot, two by two, in their best cloaths, with cakes, loaves, pasties and pies of all sorts on their heads, and after them two buffoons or jack-puddings, with their faces and cloaths smeared with meal, who diverted the mob with their antic gestures. In the same manner followed all the companies of trade in the Empire; the nobler sort, such as jewellers, mercers, &c. finely mounted and many of the pageants that represent their trades, perfectly magnificent; amongst which

G 3

that

that of the Furriers made one of the best figures, being a very large machine set round with the skins of ermins, foxes, &c. so well stuffed, that the animals seemed to be alive, and followed by music and dancers. I believe they were, upon the whole, twenty thousand men, all ready to follow his Highness if he commanded them. The rear was closed by the volunteers, who came to beg the honour of dying in his service. This part of the shew seemed to me so barbarous, that I removed from the window upon the first appearance of it. They were all naked to the middle. Some had their arms pierced through with arrows left sticking in them. Others had them sticking in their heads, the blood trickling down their faces. Some flashed their arms with sharp knives, making the blood spring out upon those that stood

stood there ; and this is looked upon as an expression of their zeal for glory. I am told, that some make use of it to advance their love ; and when they are near the window, where their mistress stands (all the women in town being veiled to see this spectacle) they stick another arrow for her sake, who gives some sign of approbation and encouragement to this gallantry. The whole shew lasted for near eight hours, to my great sorrow, who was heartily tired, though I was in the house of the widow of the *Captain Bassa* (Admiral) who refreshed me with coffee, sweatmeats, sherbet, &c. with all possible civility.

I went two days after, to see the Mosque of Sultan *Selim I.* which is a building very well worth the curiosity of a traveller. I was dressed in my Turkish

habit, and admitted without scruple; though I believe they guessed who I was, by the extreme officiousness of the door-keeper, to shew me every part of it. It is situated very advantageously in the midst of the city, and in the highest part of it, making a very noble show. The first court has four gates, and the innermost three. They are both of them surrounded with cloisters, with marble pillars of the Ionic order finely polished, and of very lively colours; the whole pavement is of white marble, and the roof of the cloisters divided into several cupolas or domes, headed with gilt balls on the top. In the midst of each court are fine fountains of white marble; and before the great gate of the Mosque, a portico with green marble pillars, which has five gates, the body of the Mosque being one prodigious dome.

done. I understand so little of architecture, I dare not pretend to speak of the proportions. It seemed to be very regular; this I am sure of, it is vastly high, and I thought it the noblest building I ever saw. It has two rows of marble galleries on pillars, with marble balustres; the pavement is also marble covered with Persian carpets. In my opinion, it is a great addition to its beauty, that it is not divided into pews, and encumbered with forms and benches like our churches; nor the pillars (which are most of them red and white marble) disfigured by the little tawdry images, and pictures, that give Roman Catholic churches the air of toy-shops. The walls seemed to be inlaid, with such very lively colours, in small flowers, that I could not imagine what stones had been made use of. But going near, I saw
they

they were crufted with japan china, which has a very beautiful effect. In the midft hung a vaft lamp of filver gilt; befides which I do verily believe, there was at leaft two thoufand of a leffer fize. This muft look very glorious when they are all lighted; but being at night, no women are fuffered to enter. Under the large lamp is a great pulpit of carved wood gilt, and juft by, a fountain to wafh, which you know is an effential part of their devotion. In one corner is a little gallery enclosed with gilded lattices for the Grand Signior. At the upper end a large *Niche*, very like an altar, raifed two fteps, covered with gold brocade, and ftanding before it two fiver gilt candlefticks, the height of a man, and in them white wax candles as thick as a man's wrift. The outside of the *Mofque* is adorned with towers

towers vastly high, gilt on the top, from whence the *Imaums* call the people to prayers. I had the curiosity to go up one of them, which is contrived so artfully, as to give surprize to all that see it. There is but one door, which leads to three different stair-cases, going to the three different stories of the tower, in such a manner, that three priests may ascend, rounding, without ever meeting each other; a contrivance very much admired. Behind the Mosque, is an Exchange full of shops, where poor artificers are lodged gratis. I saw several Dervises at their prayers here. They are dressed in a plain piece of woollen, with their arms bare, and a woollen cap on their heads, like a high crowned hat without brims. I went to see some other Mosques, built much after the same manner, but not comparable, in point of magni-

magnificence, to this I have described, which is infinitely beyond any church in Germany or England; I won't talk of other countries, I have not seen. The Seraglio does not seem a very magnificent palace. But the gardens are very large, plentifully supplied with water, and full of trees; which is all I know of them, having never been in them.

I tell you nothing of the order of Mr. W——'s entry, and his audience. These things are always the same, and have been so often described, I won't trouble you with the repetition. The young Prince, about eleven years old, sits near his father when he gives audience; he is a handsome boy, but, probably, will not immediately succeed the Sultan, there being two sons of Sultan MUSTAPHA (his eldest brother) remaining; the eldest
about

about twenty years old, on whom the hopes of the people are fixed. This reign has been bloody and avaritious. I am apt to believe they are very impatient to see the end of it. I am, Sir.

Yours, &c. &c.

P. S. I will write to you again from Constantinople.

LET,

LETTER XXXV.

To the Abbot —.

Constantinople, May 29, O. S.

I HAVE had the advantage of very fine weather all my journey, and as the summer is now in its beauty, I enjoyed the pleasure of fine prospects; and the meadows being full of all sorts of garden flowers, and sweet herbs, my berlin perfumed the air as it pressed them. The Grand Signior furnished us with thirty covered waggons for our baggage, and five coaches of the country for my women. We found the road full of the great *Spahis* and their equipages coming out of Asia to the war. They always travel with tents; but I chose to lie in houses all the way. I will not trouble you

you with the names of the villages we passed, in which there was nothing remarkable, but at *Ciorlei*, where there was a *Conac*, or little *Seraglio*, built for the use of the Grand Signior, when he goes this road. I had the curiosity to view all the apartments destined for the ladies of his court. They were in the midst of a thick grove of trees, made fresh by fountains; but I was most surprized to see the walls almost covered with little distichs of Turkish verse, writ with pencils. I made my interpreter explain them to me, and I found several of them very well turned; tho' I easily believed him, that they had lost much of their beauty in the translation. One was literally thus in English:

We

We come into this world; we lodge and we depart;

He never goes that's lodg'd within my heart.

The rest of our journey was through fine painted meadows, by the side of the sea of *Marmora*, the antient Propontis. We lay the next night at *Selivrea*, antiently a noble town. It is now a good sea port, and neatly built enough, and has a bridge of thirty-two arches. Here is a famous antient Greek church. I had given one of my coaches to a Greek lady, who desired the conveniency of travelling with me; she designed to pay her devotions, and I was glad of the opportunity of going with her. I found it an ill built edifice, set out with the same sort of ornaments, but less rich, as the Roman Catholick churches. They shewed

shewed me a saint's body, where I threw a piece of money ; and a picture of the Virgin Mary, drawn by the hand of St. LUKE, very little to the credit of his painting ; but, however, the finest Madona of Italy, is not more famous for her miracles. The Greeks have a monstrous taste in their pictures, which, for more finery, are always drawn upon a gold ground. You may imagine what a good air this has ; but they have no notion either of shade or proportion. They have a bishop here, who officiated in his purple robe, and sent me a candle almost as big as myself for a present, when I was at my lodging. We lay that night at a town called *Bujuk Cekmege*, or Great Bridge ; and the night following at *Kujuk Cekmege*, or Little Bridge, in a very pleasant lodging, formerly a monastery of Dervises, having

before it a large court, encompassed with marble cloisters, with a good fountain in the middle. The prospect from this place, and the gardens round it, is the most agreeable I have seen ; and shews, that monks of all religions know how to chuse their retirements. 'Tis now belonging to a *Hogia*, or School-master, who teaches boys here. I asked him to shew me his own apartment, and was surprized to see him point to a tall cypress tree in the garden, on the top of which was a place for a bed for himself, and a little lower, one for his wife and two children, who slept there every night. I was so much diverted with the fancy, I resolved to examine his nest nearer ; but after going up fifty steps. I found I had still fifty to go up, and then I must climb from branch to branch, with some hazard of my neck.

I thought

I thought it therefore the best way to come down again.

We arrived the next day at Constantinople; but I can yet tell you very little of it, all my time having been taken up with receiving visits, which are, at least, a very good entertainment to the eyes, the young women being all beauties, and their beauty highly improved by the high taste of their dress. Our palace is in *Pera*, which is no more a suburb of Constantinople, than Westminster is a suburb to London. All the Ambassadors are lodged very near each other. One part of our house shews us the Port, the City and the Seraglio, and the distant hills of Asia; perhaps, all together, the most beautiful prospect in the world.

A certain French author says, *Constantinople* is twice as big as *Paris*. Mr. W——y is unwilling to own 'tis bigger than London, though I confess it appears to me to be so; but I don't believe 'tis so populous. The burying fields about it are certainly much larger than the whole city. 'Tis surprizing what a vast deal of land is lost this way in Turkey. Sometimes I have seen burying places of several miles, belonging to very inconsiderable villages, which were formerly great towns, and retain no other mark of their antient grandeur, than this dismal one. On no occasion do they ever remove a stone that serves for a monument. Some of them are costly enough, being of very fine marble. They set up a pillar with a carved turbant on the top of it to the memory of a man; and as the turbants,

by

by their different shapes, shew the quality or profession, 'tis in a manner putting up the arms of the deceased. Besides, the pillar commonly bears an inscription in gold letters. The ladies have a simple pillar, without other ornament, except those that die unmarried, who have a rose on the top of their monument. The sepulchers of particular families are railed in and planted round with trees. Those of the Sultans, and some great men have lamps constantly burning in them.

When I spoke of their religion, I forgot to mention two particularities, one of which I had read of, but it seemed so odd to me, I could not believe it; yet 'tis certainly true; that when a man has divorced his wife, in the most solemn

manner, he can take her again upon no other terms; than permitting another man to pass a night with her; and there are some examples of those, who have submitted to this law, rather than not have back their beloved. The other point of doctrine is very extraordinary. Any woman that dies unmarried, is looked upon to die in a state of reprobation. To confirm this belief, they reason, that the end of the creation of woman, is to increase and multiply, and that she is only properly employed in the works of her calling, when she is bringing forth children, or taking care of them, which are all the virtues that God expects from her. And indeed their way of life, which shuts them out of all public commerce, does not permit them any other. Our vulgar notion,

notion, that they don't own women to have any souls, is a mistake. 'Tis true they say, they are not of so elevated a kind, and therefore must not hope to be admitted into the Paradise appointed for the men, who are to be entertained by celestial beauties. But there is a place of happiness destined for souls of the inferior order, where all good women are to be in eternal bliss. Many of them are very superstitious, and will not remain widows ten days, for fear of dying in the reprobate state of a useless creature. But those that like their liberty, and are not slaves to their religion, content themselves with marrying when they are afraid of dying. This is a piece of theology, very different from that, which teaches nothing to be more acceptable to God, than a vow of perpetual

tual virginity : which divinity is most rational, I leave you to determine.

I have already made some progress in a collection of Greek medals. Here are several professed antiquaries, who are ready to serve any body that desires them. But you cannot imagine how they stare in my face, when I enquire about them, as if no body was permitted to seek after medals, till they were grown a piece of antiquity themselves. I have got some very valuable ones of the Macedonian Kings, particularly one of PERSEUS, so lively, I fancy I can see all his ill qualities in his face. I have a Porphyry head finely cut, of the true Greek sculpture ; but who it represents, is to be guessed at by the learned when I return. For you are not to suppose these
antiquaries

antiquaries (who are all Greeks) know any thing. Their trade is only to sell; they have correspondents at Aleppo, Grand Cairo, in Arabia and Palestine, who send them all they can find, and very often great heaps, that are only fit to melt into pans and kettles. They get the best price they can for any of them, without knowing those that are valuable, from those that are not. Those that pretend to skill, generally find out the image of some Saint in the medals of the Greek cities. One of them, shewing me the figure of a Pallas, with a victory in her hand on a reverse, assured me it was the Virgin holding a crucifix. The same man offered me the head of a Socrates, on a Sardonix; and, to enhance the value, gave him the title of Saint

Saint Augustin. I have bespoke a mummy, which, I hope, will come safe to my hands, notwithstanding the misfortune that befel a very fine one, designed for the King of Sweden. He gave a great price for it, and the Turks took it into their heads, that he must have some considerable project depending upon it. They fancied it the body of God knows who, and that the state of their Empire mystically depended on the conservation of it. Some old prophecies were remembered upon this occasion, and the mummy committed prisoner to the Seven Towers, where it has remained under close confinement ever since. I dare not try my interest in so considerable a point, as the release of it; but I hope mine will pass without examination. I can tell

tell you nothing more at present of this famous city. When I have looked a little about me, you shall hear from me again. I am, Sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

LET

LETTER XXXVI.

To Mr. Pope.

Belgrade-Village, June 17, O. S.

I HOPE, before this time, you have received two or three of my letters. I had yours but yesterday, though dated the third of February, in which you suppose me to be dead and buried. I have already let you know that I am still alive ; but, to say truth, I look upon my present circumstances to be exactly the same with those of departed spirits. The heats of Constantinople have driven me to this place, which perfectly answers the description of the Elysian fields. I am in the middle of a wood, consisting chiefly of fruit trees, watered by a vast number of fountains, famous for
the

the excellency of their water, and divided into many shady walks, upon short grass, that seems to me artificial; but, I am assured, is the pure work of nature—within view of the Black sea, from whence we perpetually enjoy the refreshment of cool breezes, that make us insensible of the heat of the summer. The village is only inhabited by the richest amongst the Christians, who meet every night at a fountain, forty paces from my house, to sing and dance. The beauty and dress of the women, exactly resemble the ideas of the antient nymphs, as they are given us by the representations of the poets and painters. But what persuades me more fully of my decease, is the situation of my own mind, the profound ignorance I am in, of what passes among the living (which only comes to me by chance) and the great calmness

calmness with which I receive it. Yet I have still a hankering after my friends and acquaintances left in the world, according to the authority of that admirable author,

*That spirits departed are wonderous kind
To friends and relations left behind,
Which no body can deny.*

Of which solemn truth I am a *dead* instance. I think *Virgil* is of the same opinion, that in human souls there will still be some remains of human passions :

—*Cura non ipsæ in morte relinquunt.*

And 'tis very necessary to make a perfect Elysium, that there should be a river *Lethe*, which I am not so happy as to find. To say truth, I am sometimes very weary of the singing and dancing,

dancing, and sunshine, and wish for the smoke and impertinencies in which you toil ; though I endeavour to persuade myself that I live in more agreeable variety than you do ; and that *Monday*, setting of partridges ; *Tuesday*, reading English ; *Wednesday*, studying in the Turkish language, (in which, by the way, I am already very learned ;) *Thursday*, classical authors ; *Friday*, spent in writing ; *Saturday*, at my needle, and *Sunday*, admitting of visits and hearing of music, is a better way of disposing of the week, than, *Monday* at the drawing-room ; *Tuesday*, Lady Mohun's ; *Wednesday*, at the opera ; *Thursday*, the play ; *Friday*, Mrs. Chetwynd's, &c. a perpetual round of hearing the same scandal, and seeing the same follies acted over and over, which here affect me no more than they do other dead people. I can

now hear of displeasing things with pity and without indignation. The reflection on the great gulph between you and me, cools all news that come hither. I can neither be sensibly touched with joy or grief, when I consider that, possibly, the cause of either is removed, before the letter comes to my hands. But (as I said before) this indolence does not extend to my few friendships; I am still warmly sensible of yours and Mr. *Congreve's*, and desire to live in your remembrance, though dead to all the world beside.

I am, &c. &c.

LETTER XXXVII.

To the Lady —.

Belgrade Village, June 17, O. S.

I HEARTILY beg your ladyship's parcon; but I really could not forbear laughing heartily at your letter, and the commissions you are pleased to honour me with. You desire me to buy you a Greek slave, who is to be mistress of a thousand good qualities. The Greeks are *subjects* and not *slaves*. Those who are to be bought in that manner, are either such as are taken in war, or stolen by the Tartars, from Russia, Circassia or Georgia, and are such miserable awkward poor wretches, you would not think any of them worthy to be your house maids. 'Tis true, that many

thousands were taken in the *Morea* ; but they have been most of them redeemed by the charitable contributions of the Christians, or ransomed by their own relations at Venice. The fine slaves, that wait upon the great ladies, or serve the pleasures of the great men, are all bought at the age of eight or nine years old and educated with great care to accomplish them in singing, dancing, embroidery, &c. they are commonly *Circassians*, and their patron never sells them, except it is as a punishment for some very great fault. If ever they grow weary of them, they either present them to a friend, or give them their freedom. Those that are exposed to sale at the markets, are always either guilty of some crime, or so entirely worthless, that they are of no use at all. I am afraid you will doubt the

the truth of this account, which, I own, is very different from our common notions in England; but it is no less truth for all that.—Your whole letter is full of mistakes from one end to the other. I see you have taken your ideas of Turkey from that worthy author *Dumont*, who has writ with equal ignorance and confidence. 'Tis a particular pleasure to me here, to read the voyages to the Levant, which are generally so far removed from truth, and so full of absurdities. I am very well diverted with them. They never fail giving you an account of the women, whom, 'tis certain they never saw, and talking very wisely of the genius of the men, into whose company they are never admitted; and very often describe *Mosques*, which they dared not even peep into. The Turks are very proud, and will not con-

verse with a stranger, they are not assured is considerable in his own country. I speak of the men of distinction; for, as to the ordinary fellows, you may imagine what ideas their conversation can give of the general genius of the people.

As to the balm of *Mecca*, I will certainly send you some; but it is not so easily got as you suppose it, and I cannot in conscience advise you to make use of it. I know not how it comes to have such universal applause. All the ladies of my acquaintance at London and Vienna, have begged me to send pots of it to them. I have had a present of a small quantity (which I'll assure you is very valuable) of the best sort, and with great joy applied it to my face, expecting some wonderful effect to my advantage

advantage. The next morning the change, indeed was wonderful ; my face was swelled to a very extraordinary size, and all over as red as my Lady H——'s. It remained in this lamentable state three days. during which you may be sure I passed my time very ill. I believed it would never be otherwise ; and to add to my mortification, Mr. W——y reproached my indiscretion without ceasing. However, my face is since in *statu quo* ; nay, I'm told by the ladies here, that 'tis much mended by the operation, which I confess I cannot perceive in my looking-glass. Indeed, if one was to form an opinion of this balm from their faces, one should think very well of it. They all make use of it, and have the loveliest bloom in the world. For my part, I never intend to endure the pain of it again ; let my cern-

plexion take its natural course, and decay in its own due time. I have very little esteem for medicines of this nature ; but do as you please, Madam ; only remember, before you use it, that your face will not be such as you will care to shew in the drawing room for some days after. If one was to believe the women in this country, there is a surer way of making one's self beloved, than by becoming handsome, though you know that's our method. But they pretend to the knowledge of secrets, that by way of enchantment, give them the entire empire over whom they please. For me, who am not very apt to believe in wonders, I cannot find faith for this. I disputed the point last night with a lady, who really talks very sensibly on any other subject ; but she was downright angry with me, in that she did not perceive she
 had

had persuaded me of the truth of forty stories she told me of this kind; and, at last, mentioned several ridiculous marriages, that there could be no other reason assigned for. I assured her, that in England, where we were entirely ignorant of all magick, where the climate is not half so warm, nor the women half so handsome, we were not without our ridiculous marriages; and that we did not look upon it as any thing supernatural, when a man played the fool for the sake of a woman. But my arguments could not convince her against (as she said) her certain knowledge. To this she added, that she scrupled making use of *charms* herself; but that she could do it whenever she pleased; and staring me in my face, said, (with a very learned air) that no enchantments would

have their effects upon me, and that there were some people exempt from their power, but very few. You may imagine how I laughed at this discourse: but all the women are of the same opinion. They don't pretend to any commerce with the devil, but only that there are certain compositions adapted to inspire love. If one could send over a ship-load of them, I fancy it would be a very quick way of raising an estate. What would not some ladies of our acquaintance give for such merchandize? Adieu, my dear lady—I cannot conclude my letter with a subject that affords more delightful scenes to the imagination. I leave you to figure to yourself, the extreme court that will be made to me, at my return, if my travels should furnish me

with

with such a useful piece of learning.
I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c. &c.

L E T T E R XXXVIII.

To Mrs. T.

Pera of Constantinople, Jan. 4, O. S.

I AM infinitely obliged to you, dear Mrs T——, for your entertaining letter. You are the only one of my correspondents that have judged right enough, to think I would gladly be informed of the news amongst you. All the rest of them tell me (almost in the same words) that they suppose I know every thing. Why they are pleased to suppose in this manner, I can guess no reason, except they are persuaded that the breed of *Makomet's* pigeon still subsists in this country, and that I receive supernatural intelligence. I wish I could return your goodness with some diverting accounts

accounts from hence. But I know not what part of the scenes here would gratify your curiosity, or whether you have any curiosity at all, for things so far distant. To say the truth, I am, at this present writing, not very much turned for the recollection of what is diverting, my head being wholly filled with the preparations necessary for the increase of my family, which I expect every day. You may easily guess at my uneasy situation. But I am, however, comforted in some degree, by the glory that accrues to me from it, and a reflection on the contempt I should otherwise fall under. You won't know what to make of this speech; but, in this country, 'tis more despicable to be married and not fruitful, than 'tis with us to be fruitful before marriage. They have a notion, that whenever a woman leaves off bringing forth

forth children, 'tis because she is too old for that business, whatever her face says to the contrary. This opinion makes the ladies here so ready to make proofs of their youth, (which is as necessary in order to be a *received beauty*, as it is to shew the proofs of nobility, to be admitted *Knights of Malta*) that they do not content themselves with using the natural means, but fly to all sorts of quackeries to avoid the scandal of being past child-bearing, and often kill themselves by them. Without any exaggeration, all the women of my acquaintance have twelve or thirteen children; and the old ones boast of having had five and twenty or thirty apiece, and are respected according to the number they have produced. — When they are with child, 'tis their common expression to say, *They hope God will be so merciful as to send them two*
this

this time ; and when I have asked them sometimes, how they expected to provide for such a flock as they desire ? they answer, that the plague will certainly kill half of them ; which indeed, generally happens without much concern to the parents, who are satisfied with the vanity of having brought forth so plentifully. The French Ambassadress is forced to comply with this fashion as well as myself. She has not been here much above a year, and has lain in once, and is big again. What is most wonderful, is, the exemption they seem to enjoy from the curse entailed on the sex. They see all company the day of their delivery, and at the fortnight's end return visits, set out in their jewels and new clothes. I wish I may find the influence of the climate in this particular. But I fear I shall continue an English-
 woman

woman in that affair, as well as I do in my dread of fire and plague, which are two things very little feared here. Most families have had their houses burnt down once or twice, occasioned by their extraordinary way of warming themselves, which is neither by chimnies nor stoves, but by a certain machine called a *Tendour*, the height of two feet, in the form of a table, covered with a fine carpet or embroidery. This is made only of wood, and they put into it a small quantity of hot ashes, and sit with their legs under the carpet. At this table they work, read, and, very often, sleep; and if they chance to dream, kick down the *Tendour*, and the hot ashes commonly set the house on fire. There were five hundred houses burnt in this manner about a fortnight ago, and I have seen several of the owners since, who seem

not

not at all moved at so common a misfortune. They put their goods into a *Bark*, and see their houses burn with great philosophy, their persons being very seldom endangered, having no stairs to descend.

But having entertained you with things I don't like, 'tis but just I should tell you something that pleases me. The climate is delightful in the extremest degree. I am now sitting, this present fourth of January, with the windows open, enjoying the warm shine of the Sun, while you are freezing over a sad sea-coal fire; and my chamber is set out with carnations, roses, and jonquils, fresh from my garden. I am also charmed with many points of the Turkish law, to our shame be it spoken, better designed, and better executed than ours; particularly,

cularly, the punishment of convicted
 liars (triumphant criminals in our coun-
 try, God knows :) They are burnt in
 the forehead with a hot iron, when they
 are proved the authors of any notorious
 falsehoods. How many white foreheads
 should we see disfigured ? How many
 fine gentlemen would be forced to wear
 their wigs as low as their eye-brows,
 were this law in practice with us ? I
 should go on to tell you many other
 parts of justice, but I must send for my
 midwife.

L E T.

LETTER XXXIX.

To the Countess of _____.

Pera of Constantinople, March 10, O. S.

I HAVE not written to you, dear sister, these many months—a great piece of self denial. But I know not where to direct, or what part of the world you are in. I have received no letter from you since that short note of April last, in which you tell me, that you are on the point of leaving England, and promise me a direction for the place you stay in; but I have, in vain, expected it till now, and now I only learn from the Gazette, that you are returned, which induces me to venture this letter to your house at London. I had rather ten of my letters should be lost,

than you imagine I don't write; and I think it is hard fortune, if one in ten don't reach you. However, I am resolved to keep the copies, as testimonies of my inclination to give you, to the utmost of my power, all the diverting part of my travels, while you are exempt from all the fatigues and inconveniencies.

In the first place then, I wish you joy of your niece; for I was brought to bed of a daughter * five weeks ago. I don't mention this as one of my diverting adventures; though I must own, that it is not half so mortifying here as in England; there being as much difference, as there is between a little cold in the head, which sometimes happens here,

* The present Countess of Bute.

and

and the consumption coughs so common in London. No body keeps their house a month for lying-in; and I am not so fond of any of our customs, as to retain them when they are not necessary. I returned my visits at three weeks end, and about four days ago crossed the sea which divides this place from Constantinople, to make a new one, where I had the good fortune to pick up many curiosities. I went to see the Sultana *Hafiten*, favourite of the late Emperor Mustapha, who, you know, (or perhaps you don't know) was deposed by his brother, the reigning Sultan, and died a few weeks after, being poisoned, as it was generally believed. This lady was immediately after his death, saluted with an absolute order to leave the Seraglio and choose herself a husband among the great men at the Porte. I suppose you may

K 2

imagine

imagine her overjoyed at this proposal. — Quite the contrary. — These women, who are called and esteem themselves Queens, look upon this liberty as the greatest disgrace and affront that can happen to them. She threw herself at the Sultan's feet, and begged him to poignard her, rather than use his brother's widow with that contempt. She represented to him, in agonies of sorrow, that she was privileged from this misfortune, by having brought five princes into the Ottoman family; but all the boys being dead, and only one girl surviving, this excuse was not received, and she was compelled to make her choice. She chose *Bekir Effendi*, then secretary of state, and above four-score years old, to convince the world that she firmly intended to keep the vow she had made, of never suffering a second husband

husband to approach her bed ; and since she must honour some subject so far, as to be called his wife, she would chuse him, as a mark of her gratitude, since it was he that had presented her at the age of ten years to her last lord. But she never permitted him to pay her one visit ; though it is now fifteen years she has been in his house, where she passes her time in uninterrupted mourning, with a constancy very little known in Christendom, especially in a widow of one and twenty, for she is now but thirty-six. She has no black Eunuchs for her guard, her husband being obliged to respect her as a Queen, and not to enquire at all, into what is done in her apartment.

I was led into a large room, with a Sofa the whole length of it, adorned

with white marble pillars like a *Ruelle*, covered with pale blue figured velvet, on a silver ground, with cushions of the same, where I was desired to repose till the Sultana appeared, who had contrived this manner of reception to avoid rising up at my entrance, though she made me an inclination of her head when I rose up to her. I was very glad to observe a lady that had been distinguished by the favour of an Emperor, to whom beauties were, every day, presented from all parts of the world. But she did not seem to me, to have ever been half so beautiful, as the fair *Fatima* I saw at Adrianople; though she had the remains of a fine face, more decayed by sorrow than time. But her dress was something so surprizingly rich, that I cannot forbear describing it to you. She wore a vest called *Dualma*, which differs

fers from a Castan by longer sleeves, and folding over at the bottom. It was of purple cloth, strait to her shape, and thick set, on each side down to her feet and round the sleeves, with pearls of the best water, of the same size as their buttons commonly are. You must not suppose that I mean as large as those of my Lord —, but about the bigness of a pea; and to these buttons, large loops of diamonds, in the form of those gold loops, so common on birth day coats. This habit was tied, at the waist, with two large tassels of smaller pearls, and round the arms embroidered with large diamonds. Her shift was fastened, at the bottom, with a great diamond, shaped like a lozenge; her girdle as broad as the broadest English ribband, entirely covered with diamonds. Round

her neck she wore three chains, which reached to her knees ; one of large pearl, at the bottom of which hung a fine coloured emerald as big as a turkey-egg ; another, consisting of two hundred emeralds, close joined together, of the most lively green, perfectly matched, every one as large as a half-crown piece, and as thick as three crown pieces, and another of small emeralds perfectly round. But her ear-rings eclipsed all the rest. They were two diamonds shaped exactly like pears, as large as a big hazle-nut. Round her *Talpoche* she had four strings of pearl—the whitest and most perfect in the world, at least enough to make four necklaces, every one as large as the Duchess of Marlborough's, and of the same shape, fastened with two roses, consisting

of

of a large ruby for the middle stone, and round them twenty drops of clean diamonds to each. Besides this, her head-dress was covered with bodkins of emeralds and diamonds. She wore large diamond bracelets, and had five rings on her fingers (except Mr. Pitt's) the largest I ever saw in my life. 'Tis for jewellers to compute the value of these things ; but, according to the common estimation of jewels in our part of the world, her whole dress must be worth a hundred thousand pounds sterling. This I am sure of, that no European Queen has half the quantity, and the Empress's jewels, though very fine, would look very mean near hers. She gave me a dinner of fifty dishes of meat, which (after their fashion) were placed on the table but one at a time, and was extremely

tremely tedious. But the magnificence
 of her table answered very well to that
 of her dress. The knives were of gold,
 and the hafts set with diamonds. But
 the piece of luxury which grieved my
 eyes, was the table-cloth and napkins,
 which were all tiffany embroidered with
 silk and gold, in the finest manner, in
 natural flowers. It was with the utmost
 regret that I made use of these costly nap-
 kins, which were as finely wrought as
 the finest handkerchiefs that ever came
 out of this country. You may be sure,
 that they were entirely spoiled before
 dinner was over. The *sherbet* (which is
 the liquor they drink at meals) was
 served in china bowls; but the covers
 and salvers massy gold. After dinner,
 water was brought in gold basons, and
 towels of the same kind with the nap-
 kins,

kins, which I very unwillingly wiped my hands upon, and coffee was served in china with gold *Soucups* *.

The Sultana seemed in a very good humour, and talked to me with the utmost civility. I did not omit this opportunity of learning all that I possibly could of the *Seraglio*, which is so entirely unknown amongst us. She assured me that the story of the Sultan's *throwing a handkerchief*, is altogether fabulous; and the manner, upon that occasion, no other than this: He sends the *Kysir Aga*, to signify to the lady the honour he intends her. She is immediately complimented upon it by the others, and led to the bath, where she is perfumed and dressed in the most magnificent and be-

* Saucers.

coming manner. The Emperor precedes his visit by a royal present, and then comes into her apartment: neither is there any such thing as her creeping in at the bed's foot. She said, that the first he made choice of, was always after the first in rank, and not the mother of the eldest son, as other writers would make us believe. Sometimes the Sultan diverts himself in the company of all his ladies who stand in a circle round him. And she confessed, they were ready to die with envy and jealousy of the *happy she*, that he distinguished by any appearance of preference. But this seemed to me neither better nor worse than the circles in most courts, where the glance of the monarch is watched, and every smile is waited for with impatience, and envied by those who cannot obtain it.

She

She never mentioned the Sultan without tears in her eyes, yet she seemed very fond of the discourse. “ My past
 “ happiness, *said she*, appears a dream
 “ to me. Yet I cannot forget that I
 “ was beloved by the greatest and most
 “ lovely of mankind. I was chosen
 “ from all the rest, to make all his campaigns with him; and I would not
 “ survive him, if I was not passionately
 “ fond of the Princess, my daughter.
 “ Yet all my tenderness for her was
 “ hardly enough to make me preserve
 “ my life. When I left him, I passed
 “ a whole twelve-month without seeing
 “ the light. Time has softened my
 “ despair; yet I now pass some days
 “ every week in tears, devoted to the
 “ memory of my Sultan.” There was
 no affectation in these words. It was
 easy to see she was in a deep melancholy,
 though

though her good humour made her willing to divert me.

She asked me to walk in her garden, and one of her slaves immediately brought her a *Pellice* of rich brocade lined with fables. I waited on her into the garden, which had nothing in it remarkable but the fountains; and from thence, she shewed me all her apartments. In her bed-chamber, her toilet was displayed, consisting of two looking glasses, the frames covered with pearls, and her night *Talpoche* set with bodkins of jewels, and near it three vests of fine fables, every one of which is at least worth a thousand dollars (two hundred pounds English money.) I don't doubt but these rich habits were purposely placed in sight, though they seemed negligently thrown on the Sofa. When
I took

I took my leave of her, I was complimented with perfumes as at the Grand Vizier's, and presented with a very fine embroidered handkerchief. Her slaves were to the number of thirty, besides ten little ones, the eldest not above seven years old. These were the most beautiful girls I ever saw, all richly dressed; and I observed that the Sultana took a great deal of pleasure in these lovely children, which is a vast expence; for there is not a handsome girl of that age, to be bought under a hundred pounds sterling. They wore little garlands of flowers, and their own hair, braided, which was all their head dress; but their habits were all of gold stuffs. These served her coffee kneeling; brought water when she washed, &c.—'Tis a great part of the business of the older slaves to take care of these young girls,

to

to learn them to embroider, and to serve them as carefully as if they were children of the family. Now do you imagine I have entertained you, all this while, with a relation that has, at least, received many embellishments from my hand? This, you will say, is but too like the Arabian Tales—These embroidered napkins! and a jewel as large as a turkey's egg!——You forget, dear sister, those very tales were written by an author of this country, and (excepting the enchantments) are a real representation of the manners here. W travellers are in very hard circumstances. If we say nothing but what has been said before us, *we are dull, and we have observed nothing.* If we tell any thing new, we are laughed at as *fabulous and romantic*, not allowing either for the difference of ranks, which afford difference

rence of company, or more curiosity, or the change of customs that happen every twenty years in every country. But the truth is, people judge of travellers, exactly with the same candour, good nature, and impartiality, they judge of their neighbours upon all occasions. For my part, if I live to return amongst you, I am so well acquainted with the morals of all my dear friends and acquaintances, that I am resolved to tell them nothing at all to avoid the imputation (which their charity would certainly incline them to) of my telling too much. But I depend upon your knowing me enough, to believe whatever I seriously assert for truth ; though I give you leave to be surprized at an account so new to you. But what would you say, if I told you, that I

have been in a *Haram*, where the winter apartment was wainscoted with inlaid work of mother of pearl, ivory of different colours, and olive wood, exactly like the little boxes, you have seen brought out of this country; and in whose rooms designed for summer, the walls are all crusted with Japan china, the roofs gilt, and the floors spread with the finest Persian carpets? Yet there is nothing more true; such is the palace of my lovely friend, the fair *Fatima*, whom I was acquainted with at *Adrianople*. I went to visit her yesterday; and if possible, she appeared to me handsomer than before. She met me at the door of her chamber, and, giving me her hand with the best grace in the world; You christian ladies (said she with a smile, that made her as beautiful as an angel)

have

have the reputation of inconstancy, and I did not expect, whatever goodness you expressed for me at Adrianople, that I should ever see you again. But I am now convinced that I have really the happiness of pleasing you; and if you knew how I speak of you amongst our ladies, you would be assured, that you do me justice in making me your friend. She placed me in the corner of the Sofa, and I spent the afternoon in her conversation, with the greatest pleasure in the world.

—The Sultana *Hafiten*, is what one would naturally expect to find a Turkish lady, willing to oblige, but not knowing how to go about it; and 'tis easy to see in her manner, that she has lived excluded from the world. But *Fatima* has all the politeness and good breeding of a court, with an air that inspires at

once, respect and tenderness; and now that I understand her language, I find her wit as agreeable as her beauty. She is very curious after the manners of other countries, and has not the partiality for her own, so common to little minds. A Greek that I carried with me, who had never seen her before (nor could have been admitted now, if she had not been in my train) shewed that surprize at her beauty and manner, which is unavoidable at the first sight, and said to me in Italian, —— “ *This is no Turkish lady, she is certainly some Christian.* ” ——

Fatima guessed she spoke of her, and asked what she said. I would not have told her, thinking she would have been no better pleased with the compliment, than one of our court beauties to be told, she had the air of a Turk,

But the Greek lady told it to her, and she smiled, saying, *It is not the first time I have heard so; my mother was a Poloneze, taken at the siege of Caminiec; and my father used to rally me, saying, he believed his Christian wife had found some Christian gallant; for that I had not the air of a Turkish girl.*——I assured her, that if all the Turkish Ladies were like her, it was absolutely necessary to confine them from public view for the repose of mankind; and proceeded to tell her, what a noise such a face as hers would make in London or Paris. *I can't believe you,* replied she agreeably, *if beauty was so much valued in your country, as you say, they would never have suffered you to leave it.*——Perhaps, dear sister, you laugh at my vanity in repeating this compli-

ment, but I only do it, as I think it very well turned, and give it you as an instance of the spirit of her conversation. Her house was magnificently furnished, and very well fancied ; her winter rooms being furnished with figured velvet on gold grounds, and, thole for summer, with fine Indian quilting embroidered with gold. The houses of the great Turkish ladies are kept clean with as much nicety as those in Holland. This was situated in a high part of the town ; and from the window of her summer apartment we had the prospect of the sea, the islands and the Asian mountains.— My letter is insensibly grown so long, I am ashamed of it. This is a very bad symptom. 'Tis well if I don't degenerate into a downright story-teller.

teller. It may be, our proverb, that *knowledge is no burden*, may be true, as to one's self; but knowing too much, is very apt to make us troublesome to other people.

I am, &c. &c.

LET-4

LETTER XL.

To the Lady —.

Pera, March 16, O. S.

I AM extremely pleased, my dear lady, that you have, at length, found a commission for me, that I can answer without disappointing your expectations ; though I must tell you, that it is not so easy as perhaps you think it ; and that, if my curiosity had not been more diligent than any other stranger's has ever yet been, I must have answered you with an excuse, as I was forced to do, when you desired me to buy you a Greek slave. I have got for you, as you desire, a Turkish love-letter, which

which I have put into a little box, and ordered the captain of the *Smyrniote* to deliver it to you with this letter. The translation of it is literally as follows: The first piece you should pull out of the purse, is a little Pearl, which is in Turkish called *Ingi*, and must be understood in this manner.

<i>Ingi,</i>	<i>Senfin Uzellerin gingi</i>
Pearl,	Fairest of the young.
<i>Caremsil,</i>	<i>Caremsilsen cararen yök</i>
Clove,	<i>Congē gulfum timarin yök</i>
	<i>Benseny chok than severim</i>
	<i>Senin benden, haberin yök.</i>

You are as slender as this clove !

You are an unblown rose !

I have long loved you, and you have not known it.

<i>Pul,</i>	<i>Derdime derman bul</i>
Jonquil,	Have pity on my passion !

Kihât

- Kibât,* | *Birlerum sabût sabût*
Paper, | I faint every hour !
Ermüs, | *Ver bizé bir umut*
Pear, | Give me some hope.
Jabun, | *Derdinden oldum xabûn*
Soap, | I am sick with love.
Ehemür, | *Ben Oliyim fixe umûr*
Coal, | May I die, and all my years be
 yours !
Gul, | *Ben aglarum sen gul*
A rose, | May you be pleased, and your for-
 rows mine !
Hafir, | *Clim sana yazir*
A straw, | Suffer me to be your slave.
Jó hó, | *Ustunē bulunmāx pabū*
Cloth, | Your price is not to be found.
Tartsin, | *Sen gbel ben chekeim senin bārgin*
Cinnamon, | But my fortune is yours.
Girō, | *Esking ilen oldum gbirā*
A match, | I burn, I burn ! my flame consumes
 me !

Sirma,

Sirma, | *Uzunu benden ā yirmā*
Goldthread, | Don't turn away your face.
Satch, | *Bazmazun tatch*
Hair, | Crown of my head !
Uzum, | *Benim iki Guzum*
Grape, | My eyes !
Til, | *Ulugorum tez gbel*
Gold Wire, | I die——come quickly.

And by way of postscript :

Beber, | *Bize bir dogm haber*
Pepper, | Send me an answer.

You see this letter is all in verse, and I can assure you, there is as much fancy shewn in the choice of them, as in the most studied expressions of our letters ; there being, I believe, a million of verses designed for this use. There is no colour, no flower, no weed, no fruit,

fruit, herb, pebble, or feather, that has not a verse belonging to it; and you may quarrel, reproach, or send letters of passion, friendship, or civility, or even of news, without ever inking your fingers.

I fancy you are now wondering at my profound learning; but alas, dear madam, I am almost fallen into the misfortune so common to the ambitious; while they are employed on distant insignificant conquests abroad, a rebellion starts up at home; — I am in great danger of losing my English. I find 'tis not half so easy to me to write in it, as it was a twelvemonth ago. I am forced to study for expressions, and must leave off all other languages, and try to learn my mother tongue. — Human understanding is as much limited as human power,

power, or human strength. The memory can retain but a certain number of images ; and 'tis as impossible for one human creature to be perfect master of ten different languages, as to have, in perfect subjection, ten different kingdoms, or to fight against ten men at a time. I am afraid I shall at last know none as I should do. I live in a place, that very well represents the Tower of Babel ; in Pera they speak *Turkish, Greek, Hebrew, Armenian, Arabic, Persian, Russian, Sclavonian, Wallachian, German, Dutch, French, English, Italian, Hungarian* ; and what is worse, there are ten of these languages spoken in my own family. My grooms are *Arabs*, my footmen *French, English, and Germans* ; my nurse an *Armenian* ; my house maids *Russians* ; half a dozen other servants *Greeks* ; my steward an *Italian* ; my Janizaries

nizaries *Turks* ; so that I live in the perpetual hearing of this medley of sounds, which produces a very extraordinary effect upon the people that are born here ; for they learn all these languages at the same time, and without knowing any of them well enough to write or read in it. There are very few men, women, or even children here, that have not the same compass of words in five or six of them. I know myself, several infants of three or four years old, that speak Italian, French, Greek, Turkish, and Russian, which last they learn of their nurses, who are generally of that country. This seems almost incredible to you, and is, in my mind, one of the most curious things in this country, and takes off very much from the merit of our ladies, who set up for such extraordinary geniuses upon the credit of

some superficial knowledge of French and Italian.

As I prefer English to all the rest, I am extremely mortified at the daily decay of it in my head, where, I'll assure you (with grief of heart) it is reduced to such a small number of words, I cannot recollect any tolerable phrase to conclude my letter with, and am forced to tell your ladyship very bluntly, that I am

Your faithful humble servant.

LET-

L E T T E R XLI.

To the Countess of B——.

AT length I have heard from my dear lady B——, for the first time. I am persuaded you have had the goodness to write before, but I have had the ill fortune to lose your letters. Since my last, I have staid quietly at Constantinople, a city that I ought in conscience to give your ladyship a right notion of, since I know you can have none but what is partial and mistaken from the writings of travellers. 'Tis certain, there are many people that pass years here in *Pera*, without having ever seen it, and yet they all pretend to describe it. *Pera*, *Tophana*, and *Galata*, wholly inhabited by French Christians (and which, together,

ther, make the appearance of a very fine town) are divided from it by the sea, which is not above half so broad as the broadest part of the Thames ; but the Christian men are loath to hazard the adventures they sometimes meet with amongst the *Levents* or Seamen (worse monsters than our watermen) and the women must cover their faces to go there, which they have a perfect aversion to do. 'Tis true, they wear veils in Pera, but they are such as only serve to shew their beauty to more advantage, and would not be permitted in Constantinople. These reasons deter almost every creature from seeing it ; and the French Ambassadors will return to France (I believe) without ever having been there. You'll wonder, Madam, to hear me add, that I have been there very often. The *Af-mack*, or Turkish veil, is become not

only very easy, but agreeable to me; and if it was not, I would be content to endure some inconveniency to gratify a passion that is become so powerful with me, as curiosity. And indeed, the pleasure of going in a barge to Chelsea, is not comparable to that of rowing upon the canal of the sea here, where for twenty miles together down the *Bosphorus*, the most beautiful variety of prospects present themselves. The Asian side is covered with fruit trees, villages, and the most delightful landskips in nature ; on the European, stands Constantinople, situated on seven hills.—The unequal heights make it seem as large again as it is (tho' one of the largest cities in the world) shewing an agreeable mixture of gardens, pine and cypress trees, palaces, mosques, and publick buildings, raised one above another, with as much beauty
and

and appearance of symmetry as your ladyship ever saw in a cabinet adorned by the most skilful hands, where jars shew themselves above jars, mixed with canisters, babies and candlesticks. This is a very odd comparison ; but it gives me an exact idea of the thing. I have taken care to see as much of the Seraglio as is to be seen. It is on a point of land running into the sea ; a palace of prodigious extent, but very irregular. The gardens take in a large compass of ground, full of high cypress trees, which is all I know of them. The buildings are all of white stone, headed on top, with gilded turrets and spires, which look very magnificent ; and indeed, I believe there is no Christian King's palace half so large. There are six large courts in it, all built round and set with trees, having galleries of stone ; one of those for the

M 2

guard,

guard, another for the slaves, another for the officers of the kitchen, another for the stables, the fifth for the Divan, and the sixth for the apartment destined for audiences. On the ladies' side there are, at least, as many more, with distinct courts belonging to their eunuchs and attendants, their kitchens, &c.

The next remarkable structure is that of *St. Sophia*, which 'tis very difficult to see. I was forced to send three times to the *Caimairan*, (the governor of the town) and he assembled the chief *Esfendis*, or heads of the law, and inquired of the *Mufti*, whether it was lawful to permit it. They passed some days in this important debate; but, I insisting on my request, permission was granted. I can't be informed why the Turks are more delicate on the subject of this mosque, than

than on any of the others, where, what Christian pleases may enter without scruple. I fancy they imagine that, having been once consecrated, people, on pretence of curiosity, might prophane it with prayers, particularly to those Saints, who are still very visible in Mosaic work, and no other way defaced but by the decays of time; for it is absolutely false, tho' so universally asserted, that the Turks defaced all the images that they found in the city. The dome of St. *Sophia* is said to be one hundred and thirteen foot diameter, built upon arches, sustained by vast pillars of marble, the pavement and stair-case marble. There are two rows of galleries supported with pillars of parti-coloured marble, and the whole roof mosaic work, part of which decays very fast, and drops down. They presented me a handful of it; its composition

seems to me a sort of glass, or that paste with which they make counterfeit jewels. They shew here the tomb of the Emperor *Constantine*, for which they have a great veneration.

This is a dull imperfect description of this celebrated building ; but I understand architecture so little, that I am afraid of talking nonsense in endeavouring to speak of it particularly. Perhaps I am in the wrong, but some Turkish Mosques please me better. That of Sultan *Solyman* is an exact square, with four fine towers in the angles ; in the midst is a noble *Cupola* supported with beautiful marble pillars ; two lesser at the ends, supported in the same manner ; the pavement and gallery round the Mosque, of marble ; under the great cupola is a fountain adorned with such fine coloured
 I pillars,

pillars, that I can hardly think them natural marble; on one side is the pulpit of white marble, and on the other the little gallery for the Grand Signior. A fine stair-case leads to it, and it is built up with gilded lattices. At the upper-end is a sort of altar, where the name of God is written; and, before it, stand two candlesticks, as high as a man, with waxcandles as thick as three flambeaux. The pavement is spread with fine carpets, and the Mosque illuminated with a vast number of lamps. The court leading to it is very spacious, with galleries of marble of green columns, covered with twenty-eight leaded cupolas on two sides, and a fine fountain of basons in the midst of it.

This description may serve for all the Mosques in Constantinople. The mo-

del is exactly the same, and they only differ in largeness and thickness of materials. That of the Sultana VALIDA, is the largest of all, built entirely of marble, the most prodigious, and I think the most beautiful structure I ever saw, be it spoke to the honour of our sex, for it was founded by the mother of MAHOMET the fourth. Between friends, *Paul's Church* would make a pitiful, figure near it; as any of our squares would do, near the *Atterdan*, or place of horses, (*at* signifying a horse in Turkish.) This was the *Hippodrome*, in the reign of the Greek Emperors. In the midst of it is a brazen column of three serpents twisted together, with their mouths gaping. 'Tis impossible to learn why so odd a pillar was erected; the Greeks can tell nothing but fabulous legends when they are asked the meaning of it, and there is

no sign of its having ever had any inscription. At the upper end is an obelisk of porphyry, probably brought from Egypt, the hieroglyphicks all very entire, which I look upon as mere antient puns. It is placed on four little brazen pillars, upon a pedestal of square free stone, full of figures in bas-relief on two sides; one square representing a battle, another an assembly. The others have inscriptions in Greek and Latin; the last I took in my pocket-book, and it is as follows:

“ Difficilis quondam, Dominis parere Serenis

“ Jussus, et extinctis palmam portare Tyrannis

“ Omnia Theodosio cedunt, sobolique perenni.”

Your Lord will interpret these lines. Don't fancy they are a love-letter to him.

I

All

All the figures have their heads on ; and I cannot forbear reflecting again on the impudence of authors, who all say they have not ; but I dare swear the greatest part of them never saw them ; but took the report from the Greeks, who resist, with incredible fortitude, the conviction of their own eyes, whenever they have invented lies to the dishonour of their enemies. Were you to believe them, there is nothing worth seeing in Constantinople, but *Sancta Sophia*, tho' there are several larger, and in my opinion, more beautiful Mosques in that city. That of Sultan *Achmet*, has this particularity, that its gates are of brass. In all these Mosques there are little chapels, where are the tombs of the founders and their families, with wax candles burning before them.

The *Exchanges* are all noble buildings, full of fine alleys, the greatest part supported with pillars, and kept wonderfully neat. Every trade has its distinct alley, where the merchandize is disposed in the same order as in the New Exchange at London. The *Bisfisten*, or jeweller's quarter, shews so much riches, such a vast quantity of diamonds, and all kind of precious stones, that they dazzle the sight. The embroiderers is also very glittering, and people walk here as much for diversion as business. The markets are most of them handsome squares, and admirably well provided, perhaps better than in any other part of the world.

I know you'll expect I should say something particular of the slaves; and you will imagine me half a Turk, when I don't speak of it with the same horror
other

other Christians have done before me. But I cannot forbear applauding the humanity of the Turks to these creatures; they are never ill used, and their slavery is, in my opinion, no worse than servitude all over the world. 'Tis true they have no wages; but they give them yearly clothes to a higher value than our salaries to our ordinary servants. But you'll object, that men buy women *with an eye to evil*. In my opinion they are bought and sold as publickly and as infamously in all our Christian great cities.

I must add to the description of Constantinople, that the *Historical Pillar* is no more. It dropped down about two years before I came to this part of the world. I have seen no other footsteps of antiquity except the aquæducts, which are so vast that I am apt to believe they

are

are yet more antient than the Greek Empire. The Turks, indeed, have clapped in some stones with Turkish inscriptions, to give their natives the honour of so great a work ; but the deceit is easily discovered.—The other publick buildings are the *Hans* and *Monasteries* ; the first are very large and numerous ; the second few in number, and not at all magnificent. I had the curiosity to visit one of them, and to observe the devotions of the *Dervises*, which are as whimsical as any at Rome. These fellows have permission to marry, but are confined to an odd habit, which is only a piece of coarse white cloth, wrapped about them, with their legs and arms naked. Their order has few other rules, except that of performing their fantastick rites, every Tuesday and Friday, which is done in this manner : They meet together

gether in a large hall, where they all stand with their eyes fixed on the ground and their arms across, while the *Imaum* or preacher reads part of the *Alcoran* from a pulpit, placed in the midst; and when he has done, eight or ten of them make a melancholy concert with their pipes, which are no unmusical instruments. Then he reads again, and makes a short exposition on what he has read; after which they sing and play, till their Superior (the only one of them dressed in green) rises and begins a sort of solemn dance. They all stand about him in a regular figure, and while some play, the others tie their robe (which is very wide) fast round their waist, and begin to turn round with an amazing swiftness, and yet with great regard to the music, moving slower or faster as the tune is played. This lasts above an hour,

hour, without any of them shewing the least appearance of giddiness, which is not to be wondered at, when it is considered, they are all used to it from their infancy; most of them being devoted to this way of life from their birth. There turned amongst them some little Dervises of six or seven years old, who seemed no more disordered by that exercise than the others. At the end of the ceremony they shout out; "*There is no other God, but God, and Mahomet his Prophet:*" after which they kiss the Superior's hand and retire. The whole is performed with the most solemn gravity. Nothing can be more austere than the form of these people; they never raise their eyes, and seem devoted to contemplation. And as ridiculous as this is in description, there is something touching

ing in the air of submission and mortification they assume.—This letter is of a horrible length ; but you may burn it when you have read enough, &c. &c.

L E T -

LETTER XLII.

To the Countess of —.

I AM now preparing to leave Constantinople, and perhaps you will accuse me of hypocrisy, when I tell you, 'tis with regret; but as I am used to the air, and have learnt the language, I am easy here; and as much as I love travelling, I tremble at the inconveniencies attending so great a journey, with a numerous family, and a little infant hanging at the breast. However, I endeavour, upon this occasion, to do as I have hitherto done in all the odd turns of my life; turn them, if I can, to my diversion. In order to this, I ramble every day, wrapped up in my *Ferige* and *Asmack*, about Constantinople, and

amuse myself with seeing all that is curious in it. I know you will expect that this declaration should be followed with some account of what I have seen. But I am in no humour to copy what has been writ so often over. To what purpose should I tell you, that Constantinople is the antient Bizantium ? that 'tis at present the conquest of a race of people, supposed Scythians ? that there are five or six thousand mosques in it ? that *Sancta Sophia* was founded by Justinian, &c. I'll assure you 'tis not for want of learning, that I forbear writing all these bright things. I could also, with very little trouble, turn over *Knolles* and Sir *Paul Rycaut*, to give you a list of Turkish Emperors ; but I will not tell you what you may find in every author that has writ of this country. I am more inclined, out of a true female spirit of

contradiction, to tell you the falsehood of a great part of what you find in authors ; as for instance, in the admirable Mr. *Hill*, who so gravely asserts, that he saw in *Sancta Sophia*, a sweating pillar, very balsamic for disordered heads. There is not the least tradition of any such matter ; and I suppose it was revealed to him in vision, during his wonderful stay in the Egyptian Catacombs ; for I am sure he never heard of any such miracle here. 'Tis also very pleasant to observe how tenderly he and all his brethren voyage-writers, lament the miserable confinement of the Turkish ladies, who are perhaps more free than any ladies in the universe, and are the only women in the world, that lead a life of uninterrupted pleasure, exempt from cares, their whole time being spent in visiting, bathing, or the agreeable

amusement of spending money and inventing new fashions. A husband would be thought mad that exacted any degree of œconomy from his wife, whose expences are no way limited but by her own fancy. 'Tis his business to get money, and her's to spend it; and this noble prerogative extends itself to the very meanest of the sex. Here is a fellow that carries embroidered handkerchiefs upon his back to sell. And as miserable a figure as you may suppose such a mean dealer; yet I'll assure you, his wife scorns to wear any thing less than cloth of gold; has her ermine furs and a very handsome set of jewels for her head. 'Tis true, they have no places but the bagnios, and these can only be seen by their own sex; however, that is a diversion they take great pleasure in.

I was,

I was, three days ago, at one of the finest in the town, and had the opportunity of seeing a Turkish bride received there, and all the ceremony used on that occasion, which made me recollect the *Epithalamium* of *Helen*, by *Theocritus*; and it seems to me, that the same customs have continued ever since. All the friends, relations and acquaintance of the two families, newly allied, meet at the bagnio; several others go, out of curiosity, and I believe there were that day two hundred women. Those that were, or had been married, placed themselves round the rooms on the marble sofas; but the virgins very hastily threw off their cloaths, and appeared without other ornament, or covering, than their own long hair braided with pearl or ribbon. Two of them met the bride at the door, conducted by her mother and ano-

her grave relation. She was a beautiful maid of about seventeen, very richly dressed, and shining with jewels, but was presently reduced to the state of nature. Two others filled silver gilt pots with perfume, and began the procession, the rest following in pairs, to the number of thirty. The leaders sung an *Epithalamium*, answered by the others in chorus, and the two last led the fair bride, her eyes fixed on the ground, with a charming affectation of modesty. In this order they marched round the three large rooms of the Bagnio. 'Tis not easy to represent to you the beauty of this sight, most of them being well proportioned and white skinn'd; all of them perfectly smooth, and polished by the frequent use of bathing. After having made their *tour*, the bride was again led to every matron round the rooms, who saluted

saluted her with a compliment and a present, some of jewels, others of pieces of stuff, handkerchiefs, or little gallantries of that nature, which she thanked them for, by kissing their hands. I was very well pleased with having seen this ceremony; and you may believe me, that the Turkish ladies have, at least, as much wit and civility, nay, liberty, as among us. 'Tis true, the same customs that give them so many opportunities of gratifying their evil inclinations (if they have any) also put it very fully in the power of their husbands to revenge themselves, if they are discovered; and I do not doubt but they suffer sometimes for their indiscretions in a very severe manner. About two months ago, there was found at day-break, not very far from my house, the bleeding body of a young woman, naked, only wrapped

in a coarse sheet, with two wounds of a knife, one in her side, and another in her breast. She was not quite cold, and was so surprizingly beautiful, that there were very few men in Pera that did not go to look upon her; but it was not possible for any body to know her, no woman's face being known. She was supposed to have been brought, in the dead of night, from the Constantinople side, and laid there. Very little inquiry was made about the murderer, and the corpse was privately buried without noise. Murder is never pursued by the King's officers, as with us. 'Tis the business of the next relations to revenge the dead person; and if they like better to compound the matter for money (as they generally do) there is no more said of it. One would imagine this defect in their government, should make such tragedies
 very

very frequent, yet they are extremely rare; which is enough to prove the people not naturally cruel. Neither do I think, in many other particulars, they deserve the barbarous character we give them. I am well acquainted with a Christian woman of quality, who made it her choice to live with a Turkish husband, and is a very agreeable sensible lady. Her story is so extraordinary, I cannot forbear relating it; but I promise you it shall be in as few words as I can possibly express it.

She is a Spaniard, and was at Naples with her family, when that kingdom was part of the Spanish dominion. Coming from thence in a *Feleacca*, accompanied by her brother, they were attacked by the Turkish Admiral, boarded and taken.—And now how shall I modestly tell you the rest of her adventure?

The

The same accident happened to her, that happened to the fair Lucretia so many years before her. But she was too good a Christian to kill herself, as that Heathenish Roman did. The Admiral was so much charmed with the beauty, and *long-suffering* of the fair captive, that, as his first compliment, he gave immediate liberty to her brother and attendants, who made haste to Spain, and in a few months sent the sum of four thousand pounds sterling, as a ransom for his sister. The Turk took the money, which he presented to her, and told her she was at liberty. But the lady very discreetly weighed the different treatment she was likely to find in her native country. Her relations (as the kindest thing they could do for her in her present circumstances) would certainly confine her to a nunnery for the rest of her days.

days.—Her infidel lover was very handsome, very tender, very fond of her, and lavished at her feet all the Turkish magnificence. She answered him very resolutely, that her liberty was not so precious to her as her honour, that he could no way restore that but by marrying her, and she therefore desired him to accept the ransom as her portion, and give her the satisfaction of knowing that no man could boast of her favours without being her husband. The admiral was transported at this kind offer, and sent back the money to her relations, saying he was too happy in her possession. He married her, and never took any other wife, and (as she says herself) she never had reason to repent the choice she made. He left her some years after, one of the richest widows in Constantinople. But there is no remain-

ing honourably a single woman, and that consideration has obliged her to marry the present Capitan Bassa, (i. e. Admiral) his successor.—I am afraid that you will think my friend fell in love with her ravisher ; but I am willing to take her word for it, that she acted wholly on principles of honour, tho' I think she might be reasonably touched at his generosity, which is often found amongst the Turks of rank.

'Tis a degree of generosity to tell the truth, and 'tis very rare that any Turk will assert a solemn falsehood. I don't speak of the lowest sort ; for as there is a great deal of ignorance, there is very little virtue amongst them ; and false witnesses are much cheaper than in Christendom, those wretches not being punished (even when they are publickly detected)

detected) with the rigour they ought to be.

Now I am speaking of their law, I don't know, whether I have ever mentioned to you one custom peculiar to their country, I mean *adoption*, very common amongst the Turks, and yet more amongst the Greeks and Armenians. Not having it in their power to give their estates to a friend or distant relation, to avoid its falling into the Grand Signior's treasury, when they are not likely to have any children of their own, they chuse some pretty child of either sex, amongst the meanest people, and carry the child and its parents before the *Cadi*, and there declare they receive it for their heir. The parents, at the same time, renounce all future claim to it; a writing is drawn and witnessed,

and

and a child thus adopted, cannot be disinherited. Yet I have seen some common beggars, that have refused to part with their children in this manner, to some of the richest among the Greeks ; (so powerful is the instinctive affection that is natural to parents !) though the adopting fathers are generally very tender to these *children of their souls*, as they call them. I own this custom pleases me much better than our absurd one of following our name. Methinks, 'tis much more reasonable to make happy and rich, an infant whom I educate after my own manner, *brought up* (in the Turkish phrase) *upon my knees*, and who has learnt to look upon me with a filial respect, than to give an estate to a creature without other merit or relation to me than that of a few letters. Yet this is an absurdity we see frequently practised.

tised.—Now I have mentioned the Armenians, perhaps it will be agreeable to tell you something of that nation; with which I am sure you are utterly unacquainted. I will not trouble you with the geographical account of the situation of their country, which you may see in the maps; or a relation of their ancient greatness, which you may read in the Roman History. They are now subject to the Turks; and, being very industrious in trade, and encreasing and multiplying, are dispersed in great numbers through all the Turkish dominions. They were, as they say, converted to the Christian religion by *St. Gregory*, and are perhaps the devoutest Christians in the whole world. The chief precepts of their priests enjoin the strict keeping of their Lents, which are, at least, seven months in every year, and
are

are not to be dispensed with on the most emergent necessity ; no occasion whatever can excuse them if they touch any thing more than mere herbs or roots (without oil) and plain dry bread. That is their constant diet.—Mr. W——y has one of his interpreters of this nation, and the poor fellow was brought so low by the severity of his fasts, that his life was despaired of. Yet neither his master's commands, nor the doctors entreaties (who declared nothing else could save his life) were powerful enough to prevail with him to take two or three spoonfuls of broth. Excepting this, which may rather be called a custom, than an article of faith, I see very little in their religion different from ours. 'Tis true, they seem to incline very much to Mr. *Whiston's* doctrine; neither do I think the Greek church very distant from it, since

since 'tis certain, the Holy Spirit's proceeding *only* from the Father, is making a plain subordination in the Son.—But the Armenians have no notion of *Transubstantiation*, whatever account Sir *Paul Rycant* gives of them (which account I am apt to believe was designed to compliment our court in 1679) and they have a great horror for those amongst them that change to the Roman religion. What is most extraordinary in their customs, is their matrimony; a ceremony, I believe, unparallel'd all over the world. They are always promised very young; but the espoused never see one another, till three days after their marriage. The bride is carried to church with a cap on her head, in the fashion of a large trencher, and over it a red filken veil, which covers her all over to her feet. The priest asks the bridegroom whether

he is contented to marry that woman, *be she deaf, be she blind?* These are the literal words; to which having answered *yes*; she is led home to his house, accompanied with all the friends and relations on both sides, singing and dancing, and is placed on a cushion in the corner of the sofa; but her veil is never lifted up, not even by her husband. There is something so odd and monstrous in these ways, that I could not believe them till I had enquired of several Armenians myself, who all assured me of the truth of them, particularly one young fellow who wept when he spoke of it, being promised by his mother to a girl that he must marry in this manner, tho' he protested to me, he had rather die than submit to this slavery, having already figured his bride to himself, with all the deformities in nature.—I fancy
I see

I see you bless yourself at this terrible relation. I cannot conclude my letter with a more surprising story, yet 'tis as seriously true, as that I am,

Dear sister,

Yours, &c. &c.

END of the SECOND VOLUME.

[195]

I feel you think yourself as this terrible re-
laxation. I cannot conclude my letter with
a more soothing story, yet it is as le-
gitimately true as that I am,

Dear Sister,

Yours, &c. &c.

End of the Second Volume.